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Social Planning Council of Winnipeg

NEEDS ASSESSMENT ON HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL OF WINNIPEG
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SUMMARY

Why do youth run away? Who are these youth? Where do they go? What do they do while on-the-run? And how can we help those youth that are on the street and prevent others from becoming runaways? These are questions the study explores.

The study shows that runaway behaviour is complex, which indicates the need for comprehensive policies and programs. Addressing only one dimension of the problem is very likely to have only minimal results on the overall issue. Before any policies and programs are suggested and promoted it is important to be clear about the policy framework around which we can explain and reflect the complexity of runaway behaviour.

The research project was designed to explore the runaway issue and to gain an overview of it in Winnipeg. The purpose was to gain insights which would support the development of policy and programs that are responsive to the needs of young people.

Although the study has limitations, it did discover important information. First, finding and being able to interview 127 youth in a period of three winter months clearly tells us that the runaway behaviour is a serious problem in Winnipeg. Our ability to connect with this many runaways verifies the story told by the official missing youth reports. Furthermore, our survey supports indications that runaway behaviour appears to be more a female issue than a male one. For example, in 1984, there were 72.9 male reported incidents for every 100 females. By 1988, the ratio dropped to 65.3 males for every 100 female incidents. Missing person reports, for young people, increased by 53 per cent between 1984 and 1988. If these statistics reflect reality rather than being the result of changes in reporting, it appears the runaway problem is growing.

According to the supplementary cases provided by the Winnipeg Police Department, runaway behaviour begins a dramatic incline at 12 years of age and peaks at 15 years of age. Although, in relationship to younger ages, 13 and 17 year-old youth present high numbers of runaways. Youth aged 14, 15 and 16 present the greatest number of reported runaway incidents.

The survey findings indicate a similar trend -- youth start running at an early age with the average for our group of youth being 12 years. It appears that running leads to more running and only six per cent ran just once. Once a youth starts running, the likelihood of this behaviour being repeated is high. The average for our females was ten runs while for males it was six runs. The initial decision has serious consequences that can affect every aspect of a youth's life. Households from which youth run are not simply ones in which youth and their parents argue. Accurately or inaccurately, the youth describe their parental homes as ones in which siblings and parents are in conflict; where physical fights between children and parents occur; where drug and alcohol abuse prevail; and where a litany of other behaviours exist. The major point is that many of these problems fall within the mandates of such systems as child welfare, justice, education and drug and alcohol counselling agencies. Because of the overlap of jurisdiction and mandates, it appears to the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg that inter-governmental, inter-departmental and inter-agency cooperation and collaboration is vital for programs to successfully deal with the concerns expressed by the youth themselves. Furthermore, it is suggested that a coordinated, planned approach involving all of the agencies that work with youth that are *at-risk* must be developed and implemented.

The value of this study is in the breadth of issues which were identified as precipitating runaway behaviour; the descriptive information of the generally unsettled lifestyle of runaway youth; and, the variety of interventions proposed by the social service providers. The facts imply that runaway behaviour is indeed a very complex phenomenon composed of emotional, social and family relations issues. A large proportion of the runaway youth interviewed stated that there was not one, but many relatively serious problems within their homes.

The overview of issues presented in the report should be used as an initial list of issues upon which to build. For example, if a study of a representative sample of runaway youth could be conducted, issues which appear extreme in our data might be found to be less extreme. Such a study might also find problems not identified in this study. In other words, what this study does not do is establish the magnitude of any particular problem associated with runaway behaviour. It catalogues

the problems which some runaway youth face. Currently, researchers do not know, but should endeavour to find out, which problems are the most prevalent and which problems are of greatest concern to runaway youth and their parents.

An adequate and integrated response to the runaway youth problem should attempt to incorporate initiatives at three levels: prevention; intervention including protection; and repatriation. Prevention would describe programs with the goal of reducing the incidence of runaway behaviour and preventing some youth from becoming runaways. Intervention programs must include programs with the goal of protecting youth while on-the-run as well as meeting other needs of the youth while on-the-run and referring youth to appropriate agencies for services. Repatriation programs would describe programs with the goal of assisting those youth who have run to establish a healthier and safer lifestyle for themselves which might, for some, include returning to their home community.

During the past several years, preventive services have been hotly contested issues within the social, health and law enforcement communities. Although conceptually attractive and logical, prevention has been difficult to conceive and measure in operational terms. How does one prevent an undesirable event from occurring; and, if one was successful how do we know the event was actually prevented? In terms of measurement of success, means of monitoring prevalence must be considered. Currently, incidence of reported runaways is recorded by law enforcement agencies. Monitoring of the problem would be facilitated by measuring prevalence. That way, we would at least know if a few individuals are chronic runaways rather than only knowing if the number of reported incidents are increasing or decreasing. Developing an indicator of prevalence would provide policy makers with a better indicator of this problem than relying on incidence alone.

Different service delivery systems define the problem of runaway behaviour differently. How the problem is defined bears upon the intervention models developed. To some, runaway behaviour is a learned response which is subject to an educational intervention. To others, runaway behaviour is a problem of family dynamics which requires a social/clinical intervention. Still others would suggest that clinical intervention is necessary. We do not know the right answers but we do know that the youths overwhelmingly mistrust the service interventions currently available in Winnipeg. We do know that a prerequisite to designing programs other than the most obvious interventions, is greatly increased understanding of the circumstances which prompt the behaviour and the decision to run away from home or placement. A simplistic intervention has a general appeal to youth who seek help from existing resources.

An obvious intervention to protect and to reduce the risks associated with being a youth on-the-run is to establish some place that is safe as well as meets basic needs such as food and clothing. Yet, such an intervention may not be an effective means of achieving various other objectives.

Unfortunately, the literature discussing runaway youth does not address the concern of how to establish a safe house for runaway youth of all ages or what would be an appropriate age mix. In addition, the literature does not admit the possibility that some proportion of runaway youth get through the experience unscathed because they were resourceful enough to draw upon friends, relatives and others who were compassionate toward them.

The youth that form part of this study have engaged in risk behaviours and raise many concerns about the unhealthy and dangerous conditions in which runaways might live while on-the-run.

One issue which came through in the interviews with *experienced runaway youth* was that they engage in high risk behaviour while on the street. A substantial proportion of the youth in the survey engaged in unprotected sexual activity, drug abuse and criminal activities. The interviews left us with the impression that running away leads to various high risk behaviours. These subsequent behaviours might well be a part of the lifestyle of youth (or a proportion of them) even when they are living at home with their parents or in placement with other guardians. If it is, these behaviours have less to do with runaway behaviour than a particular lifestyle. Again, we do not know enough to suggest that one set of behaviour precipitates the other. This study did, however, document and provide some insight into the variety of activities with which some runaway youth are entangled. What we do not know is the number of youth who are not otherwise involved in high risk behaviours such as illegal or sexual activities but do become involved in such activities while on-the-run. The study does

indicate that the youth live multiple-problem lifestyles of which runaway behaviour tends to become a recurrent characteristic.

Eventually, most runaway youth appear to voluntarily return to their home or placement or are apprehended and returned. Important to returning is the apparent propensity to run away again. As is true with many types of problematic behaviour, breaking a cycle or preventing a cycle from beginning is a fundamental concern.

This study did not include data to analyze what happened to runaway youth once they returned to their homes or placements. Knowledge of why many youth apparently become involved in repeated runaway behaviour is needed to assess the potential effectiveness of various intervention programs targeting types of families, youth or placements.

Our data on runaway incidents came from the Winnipeg Police Department. Exchange of information on runaways with the child welfare system, and an adequate reporting of runaways to child welfare authorities is of interest for service development. It is not known if the police statistics would balance, for instance, with child welfare statistics on runaway incidents or prevalence. The level of involvement with child welfare agencies, according to the interview data collected from runaway youth, appears to be relatively low. What role child welfare services might play in minimizing the potential for recurrent runaway behaviour is an issue to be explored in future considerations and discussions. For the time being, it is not clear what information is received by child welfare authorities in regard to runaway youth or what responses are made to such reports. According to the runaway youth interviews, the majority return to the place from which they ran. What interventions are employed to minimize recurrent runaway behaviour is not known, but the fact that many of the youth do run again is strongly indicated by the interview data. This supports the proposition that whatever measures are currently taken to prevent repeat runaway incidents, these measures are relatively ineffective.

In designing and conducting this research we experienced inherent problems in studying runaway behaviour which need to be overcome if future research is to successfully address specific issues relevant to runaway youth. For instance, it is very difficult to construct a study based on a conceptual framework which explains runaway behaviour. It is difficult to locate and gain the cooperation of runaway youth. Therefore, it is extremely difficult to determine overall numbers and profiles of this population in general.

1.0 STUDY RATIONALE

In January, 1988, Pathways Inc. submitted, to the Winnipeg Core Area Initiative, a funding proposal for the establishment of a shelter for runaway and homeless youth. The submission spawned a good deal of discussion within the community and led to a broader concern with the lack of available information relevant to runaway and homeless youth. The Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, in cooperation with the Winnipeg Coalition on Homelessness, developed a proposal to conduct a Needs Assessment focusing on runaway youth. Funding by the Winnipeg Core Area Initiative greatly offset the cost of the study which The Social Planning Council of Winnipeg initiated in the fall of 1988 and completed in the fall of 1989.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

The original objectives of the study were, in hindsight, quite ambitious considering the lack of information available on runaway and homeless youth. Indeed, even the concepts of *homeless* and *runaway* were ambiguous in the beginning, as *homeless* and *runaway* children were viewed as synonymous. Also, youth and children were frequently interchanged terms. As the study evolved the objectives were narrowed and the conceptual distinctions refined. These refinements owe considerably to the nineteen-member advisory committee which served as consultants throughout the study. The committee was composed of representatives of service agencies, school divisions, the Winnipeg Police Department, and various other organizations concerned with troubled youth. A complete list of the advisory committee members is appended.

In the design and execution of this Needs Assessment, a number of difficult choices were made. These choices revolved around the original objectives which were to:

(a) Define the nature and scope of the problem of homelessness among children and youth;

(b) Examine alternative response models to the problem; and

(c) Develop specific recommendations for a response to the problem of homelessness among children and youth of Winnipeg.

The fundamental dilemma presented by the objectives was that a substantial amount of information about homelessness was assumed to exist, and that this study could build on available information. The first phase of the study was a literature review which resulted in the conclusion that much of the available information about homelessness and youth is what we would characterize as expert opinion and case study.[1] A study commissioned by the Solicitor General of Canada,[2] completed while this one was underway, concluded that:

> One of the major dilemmas faced by agencies responding to missing children incidents has been a lack of reliable information on the extent of the problem and on the characteristics of children who have gone missing. This dearth of information has hampered the development of policy, strategies, and programs to deal with the problem.

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[1] Kaye, Marcia, Kids on the Street, unpublished.

Kufeldt, K. (1984), Listening to Children - Who Cares. **British Journal of Social Work**, 14 (3),257-264.

Nye, F. (1980), A Theoretical Perspective on Running Away. **Journal of Family Issues**, 1, 274-299.

Daly, Gerald (1989), No Place Like Home: Dealing with Homelessness in Canada. **Plan Canada**, 29:3 17-19.

[2] Fisher, Joan (1989), **Missing Children Research Project Volume I: Findings of the Study**. Ottawa: Ministry of the Solicitor General, No. 1989-07, vi.

Lack of basic information about homeless children precludes meaningful consideration of alternative response models (objective 2). At this time, assessment of alternative response models could be addressed only superficially and inferentially. We would have preferred to evaluate the effectiveness of different operating response models, but were limited to asking runaway youth and service providers what they think might work.

The third objective, making recommendations for a response to homeless youth was, in the end, deemed to be inappropriate and premature considering the stage of problem understanding that we are at. Data collected in this study certainly lead to insights into the problems of runaway youth. Still, the study is limited in terms of being able to generalize to the population of Winnipeg's homeless and runaway youth. These limitations are explained in the methodology part and further illustrated by the data presented in Section 2 of this report.

Research findings presented in this report should be considered to be a preliminary assessment of the situations and needs of a select group of homeless and runaway youth in Winnipeg. While we are confident that many of the issues raised here would be presented by any group of runaway and homeless youth, we cannot verify the extent to which this would occur or that other trends would not emerge if a larger, more representative sample of youth were included. The young people interviewed for this study were generally located in one area of the city and were generally familiar with one another. That is, the group presented in this report can be considered as part of one network of runaway and homeless youth existing in Winnipeg. If other networks exhibit important differences, this empirical issue is one which could not have been addressed within the constraints of this study.

1.2 TERMINOLOGY

This report is really about *runaway* youth. The youth who were interviewed ranged in age from under ten to twenty-one years. The experience discussed was that of minors (e.g., people under the age of 18 years) even though some respondents were between 18 and 21. Indeed, the respondents in the 18 to 21 year-old category were still living the life of a runaway, which began many years before for this group of people.

Throughout the report the terms youth and children tend to be used interchangeably. One pragmatic reason for this is the relatively small number of respondents in the study population. A larger number would have provided more opportunity to categorize issues according to age. With only 127 respondents, there are limitations on the number of categories that can be used for analysis. At times, answers to interview questions are divided by respondents under and over 18 years of age. In these situations, the older group is labelled youth and the younger group is labelled children. Overall, we felt the study population was most appropriately referred to as youth rather than youth and children or more tediously, the study population. Clearly, the age of runaways and the homeless bears upon the feasibility of different responses which may be developed in the future. One would not expect service responses to be the same for very young children as they are for older teens.

Homeless is a term used throughout the report. *Runaways* are but one element of the homeless population which is an umbrella term embracing a wide range of populations. Runaways are certainly homeless while on-the-run. Runaways are also often homeless in their own minds even when officially not on-the-run. Many of the respondents in this study were not officially on-the-run when we interviewed them, but according to the respondents, being on-the-run is a state of mind as much as a physical reality. For many of these youth, returning home in the evening or after school is no sure bet. Homeless, as used in this report, refers to the period of time when runaways are on-the-run. Our use of the concept is not intended to limit its meaning. At the same time, to think that runaways are not homeless is a misnomer.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

The heart of this study is the information garnered from personal interviews with 127 youth experienced in running behaviour. This sample is not representative for it was not randomly drawn from a known population. Instead, the 127 youth represent a *purposive sample*. These respondents were selected out of contacts with many more youth on the criterion that they were self-confessed runaways. Had the study been intended to test a theory of running behaviour, a different sampling procedure would have been used. Interest in gaining *insights* into running behaviour dictated that only youth experienced in such behaviour be interviewed.

A structured interview schedule which required approximately one and one-half hours to

complete was used to ensure uniformity of information. Although many of the questions were forced-choice, several were open-ended, particularly questions designed to seek further specification or clarity of issues.[3] The interview schedule was constructed by drawing on a variety of sources including the advice and interests of the advisory committee. The majority of issues included in the interview schedule were drawn from a literature review. The following outlines general characteristic issues drawn from particular literature: the total number of runs; whether youth was accompanied in run;[4] location and type of living arrangement that youth ran from;[5] length of time on-the-run;[6] and first place that youth went after running.[7] Issues included in the interview schedule specific to home, school and peer issues were from Brennan's[8] integrated theory of the runaway. Additional issues addressed parent-child relationships;[9] and physical and sexual abuse.[10] Another major area of interest was in the runaways ability to meet their basic needs of food, shelter and medical care.[11] A specific set of questions was included to gain insight into the potential involvement of respondents in illegal activities while on-the-run.[12]

The interview schedule was pre-tested and revised before being fielded. All interviews were conducted during the twelve week period of October 11, 1988 to January 13, 1989. Interviewers were instructed to rephrase questions which gave respondents difficulty. Interviewers endeavoured to establish an informal setting for the interviews to ameliorate the lengthy time required for completion. The interview situation presented some interesting conditions. Most interviews were conducted in the eatery area of Portage Place (large downtown mall). Very often, the respondent was accompanied by friends who would either sit with the respondent during the interview or would be stationed a short distance away, watching the proceedings.

Before any interviews were conducted it took approximately four weeks for the interviewers to gain access to the network of runaway youth in the downtown area. This might be considered a minimum period of time considering that the process was facilitated by one of the interviewer's experience working in various youth programs and as a *street kid* as a youth. Through one of her previous acquaintances, a number of youth were recruited for the study. After the first few interviews were completed, there were fewer lags between interviews. The two interviewers spent most of their time hanging-out in the mall and other establishments in the downtown area known to be frequented by runaway youth. Over time and through communication within the network, runaways began to make themselves known to the interviewers. Interviews were conducted at all hours of the day and night. In some instances, youth would not do the interview at the first contact with the interviewers, but made arrangements to meet them later.

Interviewers tried ways other than hanging out in malls and video game parlours to find runaway youth. A list of runaway youth furnished by social service providers did not prove to be a profitable approach. Interviewers found these youth back in their homes or in placements. When they went to interview these youths, the parents or other care-givers persisted on sitting in on the interview

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[3] A copy of the interview schedule is available from The Social Planning Council of Winnipeg.

[4] Brennan, T., Huizinga, D., and Elliott, D. S. (1978). The Social Psychology of Runaways. Lexington, MA: D.D. Health.

[5] Kufeldt, K. and Nimmo, M. (1987). Kids on the Street They Have Something to Say: Survey of Runaway and Homeless Youth. **Journal of Child Care**, Vol. 3, No. 2, 53-61.

[6] Brennan (1978); and, Kufeldt and Nimmo, (1987).

[7] Brennan (1978); and, D'Angelo, R. (1974). Families of Sand: A Report Concerning the Flight of Adolescents from Their Families. Columbus: School of Social Work, Ohio State University.

[8] Brennan (1978).

[9] Kufeldt and Nimmo (1987) and D'Angelo (1974).
Spillane-Grieco, E. (1984). Feelings and Perceptions of Parents and Runaways. **Child Welfare**, 63 (2), 159-166.
Borgman, R.(1986). Don't Come Home Again: Parental Banishment of Delinquent Youths. **Child Welfare**. 65, 295-304.

[10] Kufeldt and Nimmo (1987).
Bolton, F., Reich, J., and Gutierres, S. (1977). Delinquency Patterns in Maltreated Children and Siblings. **Victimology**, 2 (2), 349-357.
Gutierres, S., and Reich, J. (1981). A Developmental Perspective on Runaway Behaviour: Its Relationship to Child Abuse, **Child Welfare**, 60 (2), 89-94. Faber, E., Kinast, C., McCoard, W., and Falkner, D. (1984). Violence in Families of Adolescent Runaways. **Child Abuse and Neglect**, 8, 295-299.

[11] Kufeldt and Nimmo (1987).

[12] Kufeldt and Nimmo (1987).

which intimidated the youth from being open and honest. Interviewers also visited various youth programs in an effort to recruit runaway youths, but found this to be a very low yield approach for identification.

Of all the approaches tried, hanging-out at runaway hang-outs combined with having an "in" with the runaway network was the most productive means of recruiting respondents. Although this approach is time-consuming and relatively costly, it is certainly the most effective means of contacting and interviewing this particular population. Going to them and interviewing on their turf was very likely cost-effective in the end. Mention should be made of the fact that the interviewers carried with them food vouchers, condoms, free passes to the YM-YWCA and a card about the AIDS Information Line for distribution to respondents. At the conclusion of the interview, interviewers would give as much of what they had to respondents depending on the situation each respondent appeared to be in. Respondents were also given a thank-you letter signed by the project manager and interviewers. The extent to which these activities served as an incentive is unknown. Our belief is that the recruitment process was facilitated by: (a) having runaway youth who were acquainted with one of the interviewers recommend doing the interviews to other runaways; (b) conducting interviews on the runaway's turf; (c) being visible and open to the runaway population; and (d) offering incentives and a gesture of appreciation.

Section 2 of this report discusses the prevalence of runaway behaviour based on official statistics provided by the Winnipeg Police Department. Section 3 contains the analysis of the 127 interviews with runaway youth. Section 4 of the report contains an overview of the responses from interviews with 22 key actor surveys (see Appendix B). A group of respondents was selected from social service, law enforcement and other relevant organizations to comment on the major findings from the runaway youth survey data. These interviewers were open-ended and very exploratory. The general views presented by the key actors are presented in outline form in Section 4. As with the runaway analysis, the key actor information is treated as exploratory and useful for its insight while not intended to be representative of any particular population. People interviewed were selected for their experience and insightfulness. The views outlined in Section 4 are intended to provoke future deliberations regarding runaway youth as are the findings of the runaway youth survey.

2.0 INCIDENCE

As a context for the interview information provided in subsequent sections, official law enforcement agency statistics on runaways are presented in this section. The statistics are intended as an overview of the prevalence of runaway behaviour in Winnipeg. It is important to note that the data presented in this section are independent and in no way associated with the data presented in following sections. The sources of the overview data in this section are:

(a) WINNIPEG POLICE DEPARTMENT RUNAWAY YOUTH STATISTICS, 1984 THROUGH 1988.

(b) WINNIPEG POLICE DEPARTMENT RUNAWAY YOUTH STATISTICS, JANUARY THROUGH AUGUST 1988 - SPECIAL PRINT-OUT OF CASES.

(c) STATISTICS CANADA 1986 CENSUS FIGURES.

(d) MISSING CHILDREN RESEARCH PROJECT VOLUME 1: FINDINGS OF THE STUDY - A FOCUS ON RUNAWAYS (1989) NO. 1989-07, MINISTRY OF THE SOLICITOR GENERAL OF CANADA.

The magnitude of the runaway phenomenon is difficult to accurately enumerate. Missing person reports maintained by law enforcement agencies are the primary source of statistics on runaways. Accuracy of these statistics is influenced by the completeness of reporting, recording procedures and policies of various child welfare agencies. Completeness is thought to be related to repetitive runaway behaviour and to the relationship between parents and the runaway. Some parents may become reluctant to report runaway incidents if the behaviour is repetitive. Parents may be embarrassed by their apparent lack of control or believe the child will return within a short period of time. Parents are unlikely to report a child as missing when the parents have effectively banished the child from the home. These factors result in under-reporting of runaways. Child welfare policies tend to over-report runaways in that children who are actually "absent without leave" from a care facility are often

reported as missing. In these situations a child may not return to a group home immediately after school, but does return late in the evening.

2.1 PREVALENCE VERSUS INCIDENCE

Official runaway statistics, as flawed as they may be, are the best available indicator of the runaway phenomenon. These statistics generally reflect the number of runaway incidents reported to law enforcement agencies. Determination of the number of individuals who reportedly run away requires the exploration of missing person reports.

A research report completed by the Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada[13] during the conduct of this study provides some insight into individual runaways. That study concluded that *54 per cent of reported runaway incidents* were accounted for by *25 per cent of the reported runaway youth*. Four cities (Edmonton, Montreal, Surrey and Toronto) were included in the Ministry's study. In all four study sites, the proportion of one-quarter of runaway youth accounting for approximately one-half of runaway incidents prevailed.

The Ministry's study implies that a relatively small proportion of youth account for a large proportion of runaway reports:

> ...of the 7,678 children accounting for the 12,446 cases, only 25% were multiple-incident children, and that this small group accounted for over one-half (54%) of the cases.
>
> It is also apparent that the percentage of multiple-incident children is fairly consistent across sites and that, for each of the four sites, a small proportion of the total number of children accounted for a substantial proportion of the total number of cases. The percentage of cases accounted for by these children fluctuated slightly across sites ranging from a low of 46% in Montreal to a high of 60% in Edmonton.[14]

Although the Ministry's study provided insight into the prevalence of runaway behaviour, insights were minimized by the limited information routinely recorded on runaway youth by the four relevant police departments. Limited information also circumscribed the insights into prevalence that could be produced in the current study. The following descriptive data was garnered from Winnipeg Police Department Missing Persons Reports, relevant to youth, for 1984 through 1988.

2.2 WINNIPEG MISSING YOUTH

The statistics presented in this part of the report for Winnipeg are *reported incidents*, not reported individual runaways as discussed above. A steady increase in reported runaway incidents occurred between 1984 and 1988. The following set of figures illustrates that: (a) reported incidents have increased annually since 1984; and (b) the rate of increase of reported incidents was more pronounced for females than males. Overall, there was an increase of 53 per cent in reported runaways from 1984 to 1988 as illustrated in the following figure.

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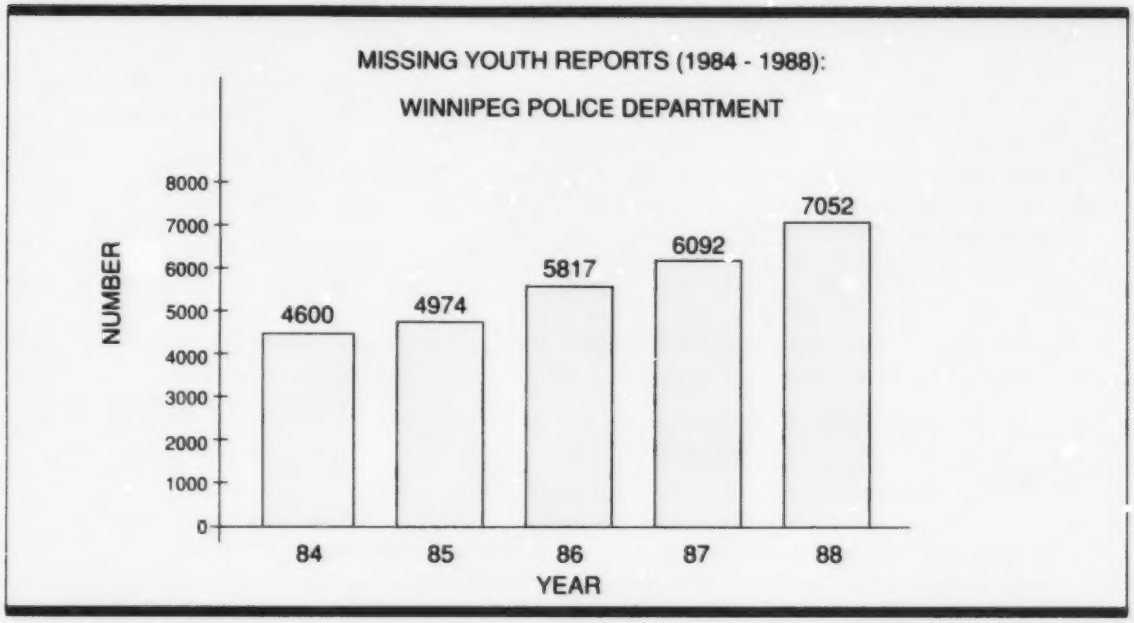
[13] Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada, (1989) Missing Children Research Project Volume 1: Findings of the Study - A Focus on Runaways, Ottawa No. 1989-07.

[14] Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada, (1989) p. 9.

FIGURE 2.1
MISSING YOUTH REPORTS: 1984 - 1988



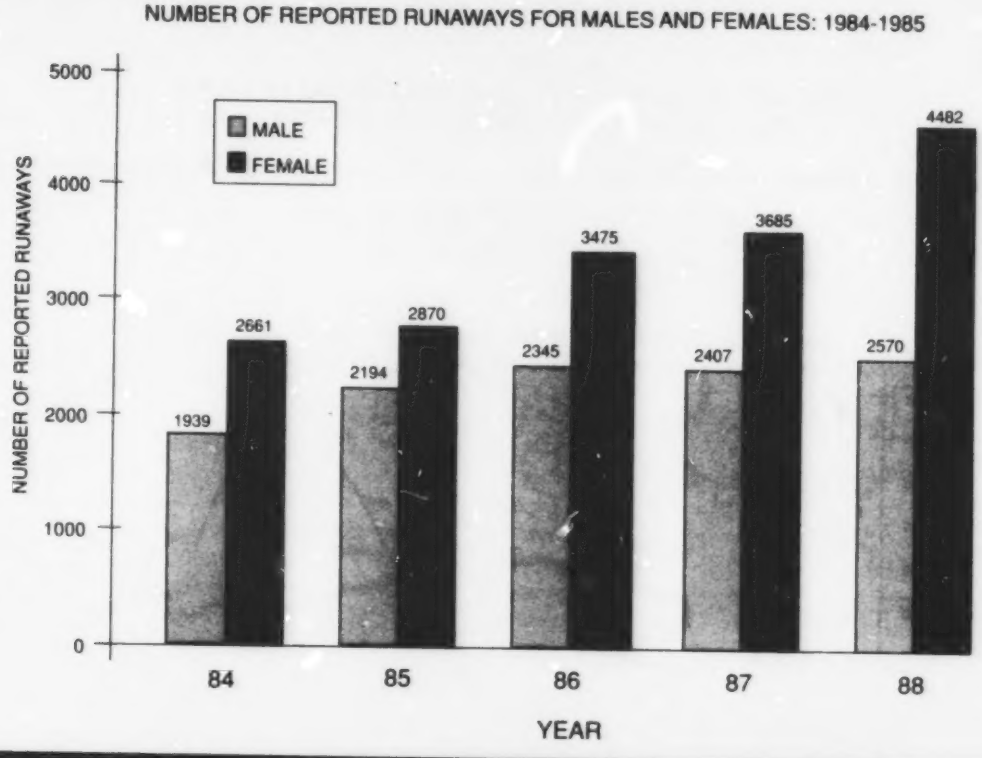
In each year from 1984 through 1988, females accounted for a larger proportion of runaway incidents than males. A number of statistics are used to illustrate the difference in the increase of reported runaway incidents for males and females. The following figure compares the number of reported incidents for males and females for each year.

As mentioned, there was a 53 per cent increase in reported runaway incidents between 1984 and 1988. The increase in reported incidents of male runaways between 1984 and 1988 was 33 per cent compared to 68 per cent for females. The apparent trend of greater acceleration of reported female runaway incidents is clearly seen in the number of male per 100 female runaway incidents presented in the following table.

TABLE 2.1
WINNIPEG RUNAWAY REPORTS: GENDER, NUMBER OF MALES PER 100 FEMALES AND TOTALS BY YEAR

YEAR	REPORTED RUNAWAY INCIDENTS MALE	FEMALE	NUMBER OF MALES PER 100 FEMALES	TOTAL REPORTED INCIDENTS
1984	1,939 (42%)	2,661 (58%)	72.9	4,600
1985	2,104 (42%)	2,870 (58%)	73.3	4,974
1986	2,345 (40%)	3,475 (60%)	67.5	5,817
1987	2,407 (40%)	3,685 (60%)	65.3	6,092
1988	2,570 (36%)	4,482 (64%)	57.3	7,052

FIGURE 2.2
MISSING YOUTH REPORTS: YEAR BY GENDER



The ratio of males per 100 females clearly illustrates that reported runaway behaviour is increasing more rapidly among females than males. Another interesting feature of the statistic is the notable change in the ratio in 1986 and 1988. Future studies of runaway behaviour should explore differences between males and females as well as the possibility that there is a differential reporting pattern. For instance, the cultural tendency to be more protective of females than males may explain at least part of the difference in reporting statistics. Supplemental data furnished by the Winnipeg Police Department allowed exploration of age and geographic characteristics of reported runaways.

2.3 SUPPLEMENTARY WINNIPEG STATISTICS

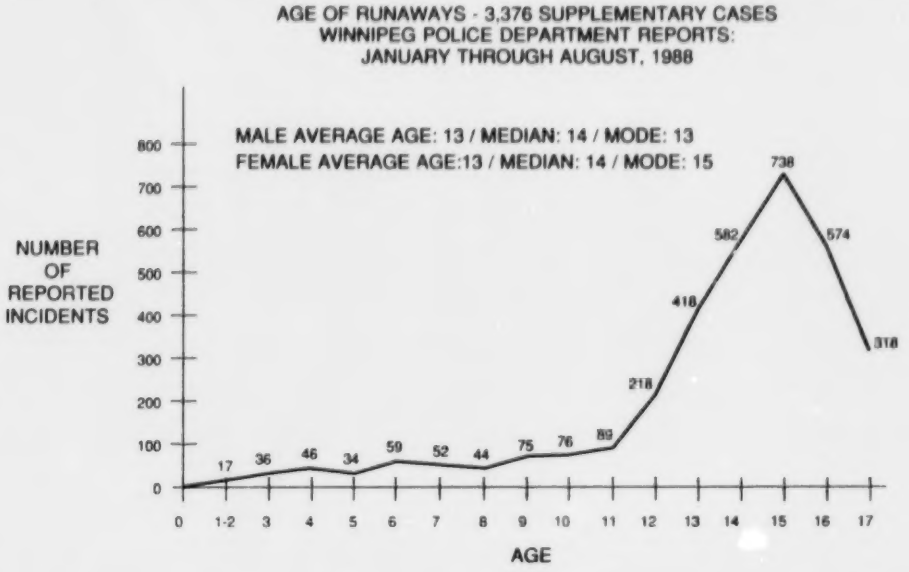
During the fall of 1988, when this study was initiated, the Winnipeg Police Department supplied the researchers with a special print-out of runaway characteristics which enabled the determination of the age of the runaways and the area of the city where they resided when the report was made. The statistics presented in this part represent runaway reports received by the Winnipeg Police Department from January through August, 1988. These reports portray 3,376 of the total 7,052 received during 1988.

The following figure presents the age of reported *missing youth*. These reports are generally referred to as runaways although the very young children most likely represent other categories. Children who are lost or abducted are represented in the reports, but not distinguished in the special print-out provided by the Winnipeg Police Department. Abducted, lost and other categories separate from runaway constituted a relatively small proportion of missing youth reports studied in the Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada research.[15] Of the 12,446 missing children cases for which the Ministry's researchers located relevant data, 3 per cent were reportedly abducted, 86 per cent were

[15] Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada, (1989).

reportedly runaway, and 11 per cent were categorized as other. Proportionately, the categories of runaways were consistent among the four research sites. That consistency supports our assumption that a similar distribution of categories prevails in Winnipeg. Logically, the very young are more likely to be abducted or lost than are older children and adolescents. Those children under six years of age (4%) of the Winnipeg supplementary statistics presented below are assumed to have most likely been lost or abducted

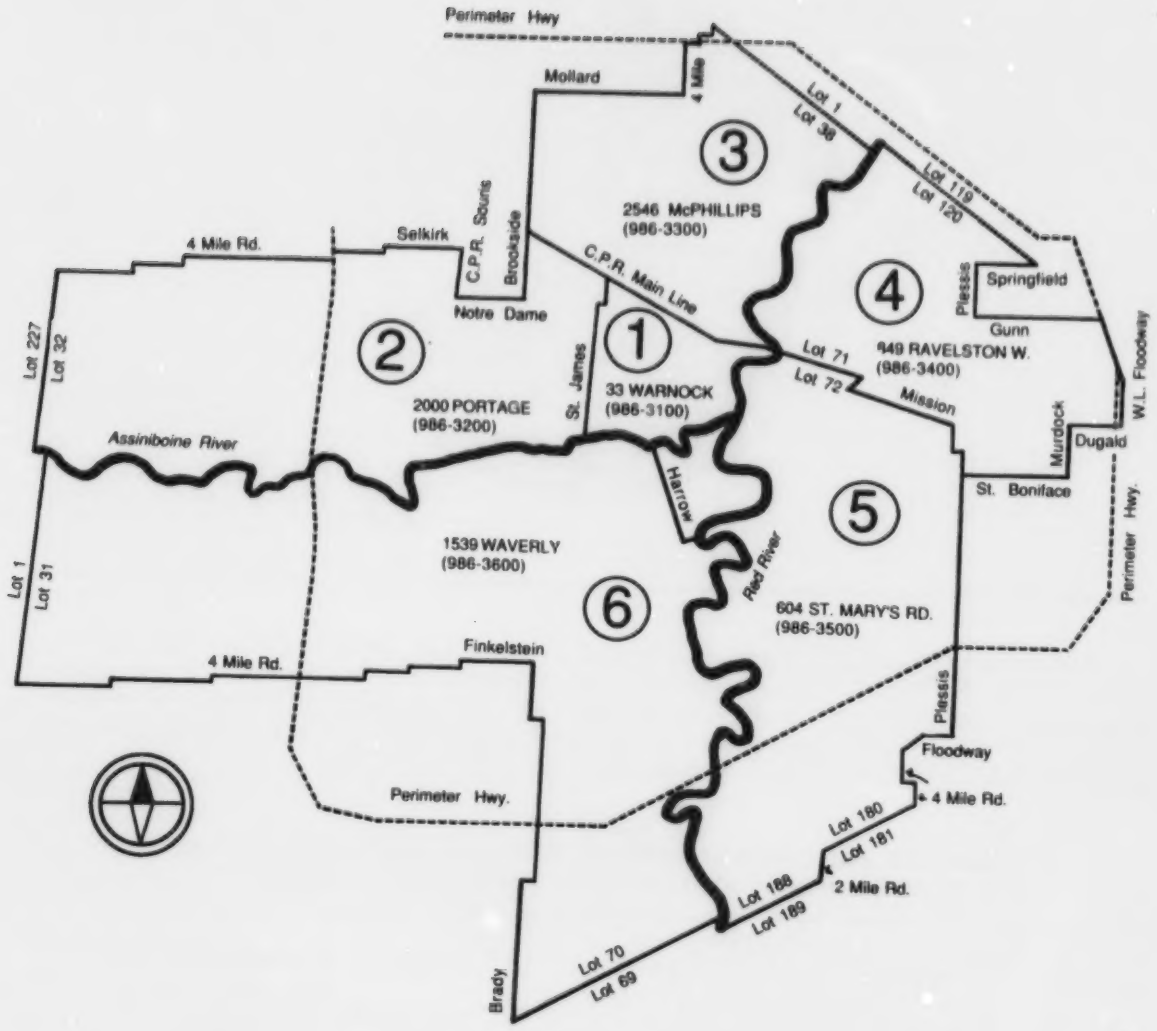
FIGURE 2.3
AGE OF REPORTED RUNAWAYS: SUPPLEMENTARY CASES FROM JANUARY THROUGH AUGUST, 1988



The preceding figure implies a relationship between runaway behaviour and age. While there is a general pattern of increasing reported runaways up to the age of 10 years, at 12 years of age reports begin a dramatic incline peaking at 15. Future studies may explore the possible artificial decline at 16 and 17 years of age. Runaway behaviour may be replaced with disassociation of youth with their families at this age. For instance, youth at this age may be banished by parents or leave without resistance.

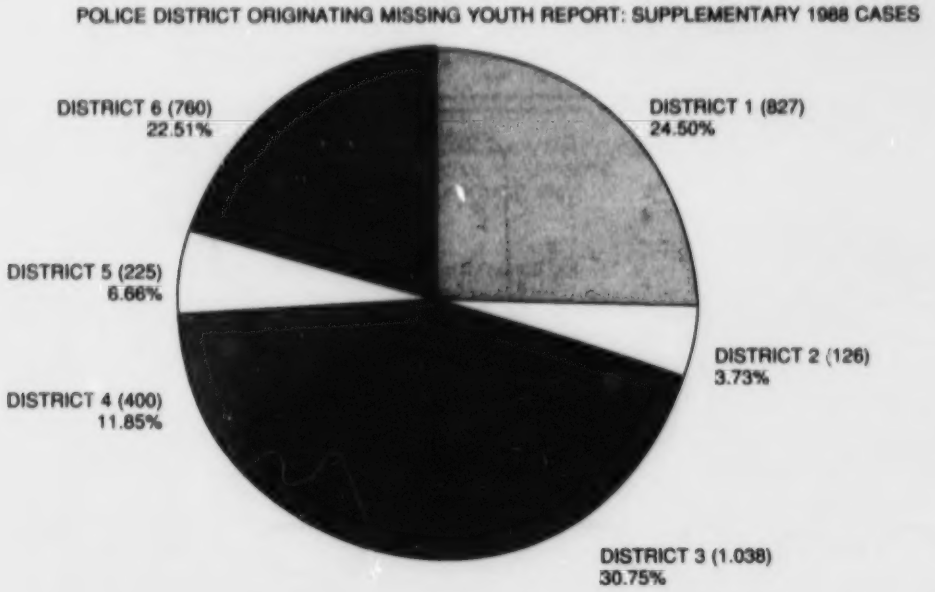
Missing youth reports are unequally distributed among the different parts of the city. Some areas may be over-represented by virtue of the concentration of group homes and other child welfare facilities. Although our study did not explore the reasons for different reporting rates among areas of Winnipeg, our figures do suggest that marked differences exist. In general, the statistics imply that the social service, education and law enforcement resources in different parts of Winnipeg are faced with varying magnitudes of runaway behaviour. A map of the six Winnipeg Police Department Districts is presented on the following page. These districts are generally coterminous with the organization of child welfare agencies.

FIGURE 2.4
WINNIPEG POLICE DEPARTMENT DISTRICTS



The following figure presents the number of missing youth reports originating in each of the six Winnipeg Police Department Districts. The figure is based on the supplemental special print-out provided for January through August of 1988.

FIGURE 2.5
DISTRIBUTION OF MISSING YOUTH REPORTS BY POLICE DISTRICT: SUPPLEMENTARY CASES (1988)



The highest number of missing youth reports emanate from District 3 followed by Districts 1 and 6, respectively. When we statistically control for the number of children at-risk (e.g., the number of children under the age of 18 years living within the different districts) the order of estimated prevalence changes slightly. Indeed, we assume that children between 6 and 17 years of age are the primary at-risk population for runaway behaviour.

TABLE 2.2
SELECTED AGE DISTRIBUTIONS BY DISTRICT: RATIO OF RUNAWAY REPORTS PER 1,000 YOUTH 6-17 YEARS OLD BY DISTRICT[16]

DISTRICT	(POPULATION) 6 - 11 MALE	6 - 11 FEMALE	12 - 17 MALE	12 - 17 FEMALE	TOTAL	REPORTED RUNAWAYS PER 1,000 YOUTH
1	3,105	2,970	3,175	3,030	12,280	67.3
2	2,415	2,285	3,235	2,940	10,875	11.6
3	4,585	4,315	4,555	4,285	17,740	58.5
4	4,875	4,645	4,915	4,720	19,155	20.9
5	3,815	3,655	4,030	3,955	15,455	14.6
6	4,735	4,425	5,235	4,995	19,390	39.2
TOTAL	23,525	22,290	25,140	23,875	94,830	35.6

[16] Population figures are from 1986 Census reports for Community Committee Areas.

District 1 represents the greatest experience with runaway behaviour according to the ratio of missing youth reports to population age 6 through 17 years.[17] District 3 represents the second highest ratio with District 6 the third highest ratio. For the entire city of Winnipeg there were 25.6 missing youth reports per 1,000 youth between the age of 6 and 17 years. Districts 1, 3 and 6 exceeded the overall ratio and Districts 2, 4 and 5 were below the overall ratio.

[17] The calculation of reported runaways per 1,000 youth used all missing youth reports but limited population to the 6 through 17 ages. The ratios for Districts 1 through 6, respectively, calculating with all runaway reports and all youth 17 years old and younger are: 40.7; 8.2; 38.3; 13.8; 9.8; and 26.5.

3.0 HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH SURVEY

The Homeless Children and Youth Survey addressed various facets of the issue of runaway/homelessness. The survey examined the demographics of the sample of runaway youth and the reasons why they ran from their homes or placements, detailed the circumstances surrounding the youths' most recent runaway episode, and presented an overview of the kinds of experiences which youths undergo in the course of their runaway histories. It also described youth's contact with, and assessments of, key service agencies, and presented youth's perceptions of what kinds of services and programs are required to meet the needs of runaway/homeless youth. The results of this detailed survey, conducted with 127 runaway/homeless children and youths, are presented below.

3.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF RUNAWAYS

3.1.1 Socio-Demographics

i) Gender:

The majority of runaway youths in the survey sample (60 per cent) were female (of the total of 127 youths interviewed, 76 were female and 51 were male). This distribution is almost the same as the 61 per cent/39 per cent female-to-male ratio found in the analysis of missing persons reports recorded by the police in 1988.

ii) Age at Time of Interview:[18]

More than four-fifths of the runaway youths in the survey sample (83 per cent) were 15 years-of-age-or-older (Table 3:1). The largest proportion of these youths (28 per cent) were adults at the time of the interview. The average age for all youth in the sample was 16 years, while the sub-sample of youth aged 17-and-under averaged 15 years-of-age. This latter group of surveyed youths was older, on average, than the youth reported missing to the police in 1988 (average = 14 years).

Females in the survey sample were older than males (Table 3:2). The average age for all female youth was 17 years-of-age, compared to 16 years for males. Similarly, females in the sub-sample of youth aged 17-and-under averaged 16-years-of-age, compared to 15 years for male youths. Survey participants were again found to be older (males-15 years; females-16 years) than their respective counterparts reported missing to the police in 1988 (males-13 years; females-14 years).

TABLE 3:1
AGE OF RUNAWAY YOUTH AT TIME OF INTERVIEW

AGE	N	%
11	2	2
12	1	1
13	6	5
14	11	9
15	23	18
16	26	20
17	21	17
18 AND OVER	37	28
TOTAL	127	100

ALL YOUTH
Average = 16 years
Median = 16 years
Mode = 16 years

YOUTH AGE 17 AND UNDER
Average = 15 years
Median = 16 years
Mode = 16 years

[18] Only 14 out of 85 youths age 17-and-under (about 16 per cent) reported that they had engaged in their most recent runaway episode more than one year ago. Hence, for this sub-sample of youths, "age at time of interview" very closely reflects "age at time of last run."

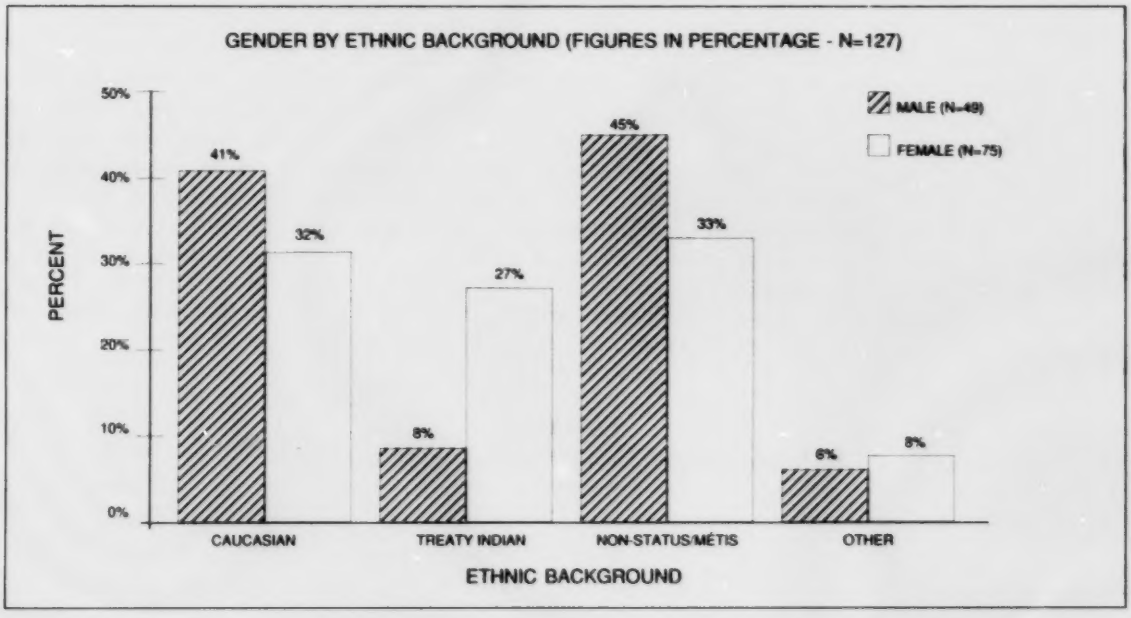
TABLE 3:2
GENDER BY AVERAGE AGE OF RUNAWAY YOUTH AT TIME OF INTERVIEW

	ALL YOUTH	YOUTH AGE 17 AND UNDER
MALES	16 YEARS	15 YEARS
FEMALES	17 YEARS	16 YEARS

iii) Ethnic Background:

About two-thirds of the youth in the survey sample were Caucasian (35 per cent) or Métis (32 per cent) (Figure 3:1). Nineteen per cent of runaway youth were Treaty Indian, 7 per cent Non-Status Native, 3 per cent Black, 1 per cent Asian and 3 per cent were from other ethnic backgrounds (East Indian, Latin).

Figure 3:1
ETHNIC BACKGROUND AND GENDER OF RUNAWAY YOUTH



A greater proportion of male survey participants were Caucasian or Non-Status Native/Métis (41 per cent and 45 per cent respectively). In contrast, female runaway youth were more likely to be Treaty Indian (27 per cent) than male runaways (8 per cent).

Caucasian runaway youth were, on average, older than survey participants from other ethnic backgrounds (Table 3:3). The average age for all Caucasian youth in the sample was 17 years, compared to 16 years for youth in all other ethnic categories. The same pattern was found for the sub-sample of youth aged 17-and-under, although, of course, the averages were lower.

TABLE 3:3
ETHNIC BACKGROUND BY AVERAGE AGE OF RUNAWAY YOUTH AT TIME OF INTERVIEW

ETHNIC BACKGROUND	ALL YOUTH	YOUTH AGE 17 & UNDER
CAUCASIAN	17 years	16 years
TREATY INDIAN	16 years	15 years
NON-STATUS NATIVE/MÉTIS	16 years	15 years
OTHER (BLACK, ASIAN, EAST INDIAN, LATIN)	16 years	15 years

iv) Living Arrangements at Time of Interview:

About half of the survey participants were in a locked facility (25 per cent) or a foster home/ group home placement (6 per cent and 17 per cent respectively) at the time of the interview. Nineteen per cent of the youths were living on their own, 12 per cent were residing in a parental home, 12 per cent with a friend or boy/girlfriend, 3 per cent with a relative, another 3 per cent were residing on the street and 3 per cent were in other living arrangements (Table 3:4). These living arrangements are explained by the fact that the overwhelming majority of runaway youths in the survey sample (89 per cent) were *not* currently on-the-run at the time that interviews were conducted. In other words, their most recent runaway episode had been resolved for the time being, which meant that the survey was focused on a discussion of their past runaway experiences.

TABLE 3:4
LIVING ARRANGEMENTS OF RUNAWAY YOUTH AT TIME OF INTERVIEW

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS	N	%
TWO PARENT HOME	10	8
ONE PARENT HOME	5	4
RELATIVE	4	3
FRIEND'S	11	9
BOY/GIRLFRIEND'S	4	3
ON OWN	24	19
FOSTER HOME	8	6
GROUP HOME/RECEIVING HOME	21	17
LOCKED FACILITY	31	25
STREET	**4**	**3**
OTHER	4	3
TOTAL	126	100

v) Family History:

The majority of runaway youths in the survey sample reported that they did not get along well with their families when they last lived at home (Figure 3:2). Thirty-five per cent said that they got along very poorly with their families, 26 per cent got along poorly, 17 per cent fairly well, 15 per cent well and 7 per cent said that they got along very well with their families when they were last at home.

As shown in Table 3:5, various types of family problems were prevalent in the families of these runaway youths. About nine-tenths of the survey participants reported that verbal arguments (93 per cent) and alcohol- and drug-abuse (90 per cent) had occurred in their families when they last lived at home. Seventy-four per cent of the runaway youths indicated that physical fights had occurred in the family unit. About two-thirds of the runaway youths reported unfair parental discipline (63 per cent), arguments with parents regarding school (66 per cent) and suicidal thoughts or attempts by self or other family members (69 per cent). Nearly half of these youths (49 per cent) revealed that they had been sexually abused.

FIGURE 3:2
RUNAWAY YOUTH ASSESSMENT OF HOW THEY GOT ALONG WITH THEIR FAMILIES WHEN LAST AT HOME

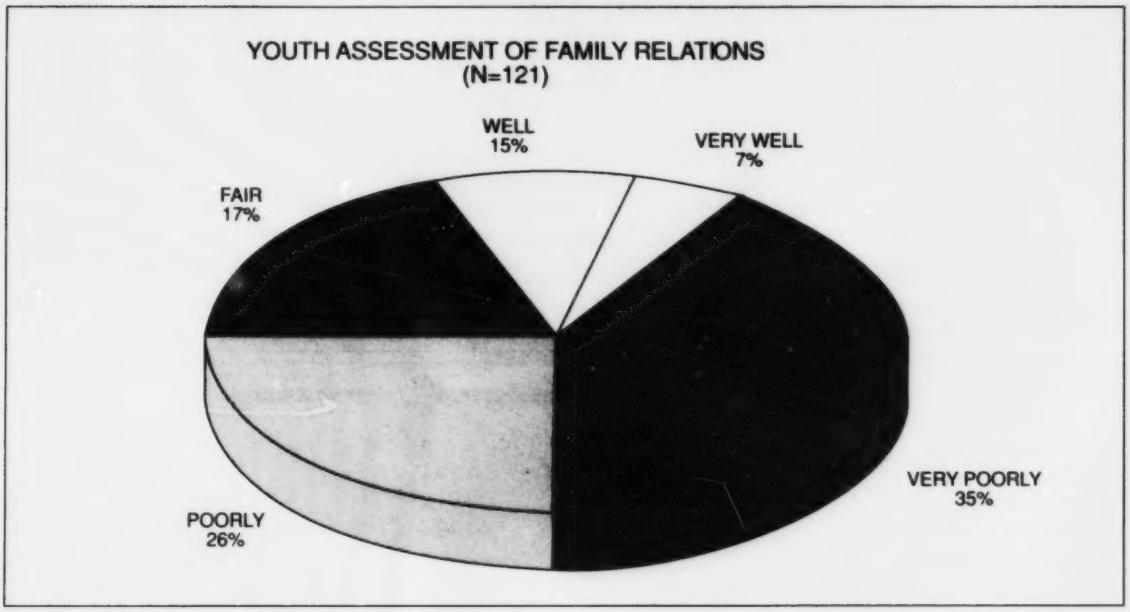


TABLE 3:5
PROPORTION OF RUNAWAY YOUTH WHO REPORTED HAVING VARIOUS TYPES OF FAMILY PROBLEMS WHEN LAST AT HOME (IN PER CENT)

	PRESENCE/ABSENCE OF PROBLEMS		
TYPE OF FAMILY PROBLEM	NO	YES	TOTAL
VERBAL ARGUMENTS	7	93	100
ARGUMENTS REGARDING SCHOOL	34	66	100
UNFAIR PARENTAL DISCIPLINE	37	63	100
PHYSICAL FIGHTS	26	74	100
ALCOHOL/DRUG ABUSE	10	90	100
SUICIDE	31	69	100
SEXUAL ABUSE	51	49	100

Family problems which were experienced specifically by the runaway youths are shown in Table 3:6. Ninety per cent of the survey participants reported verbal arguments between themselves and their parents; 66 per cent engaged in physical fights with their parents; and 59 per cent felt that they were disciplined unfairly. And, according to their self-reports, 76 per cent of these runaway youths had alcohol- or drug-abuse problems, 62 per cent had entertained thoughts of committing suicide, 52 per cent had actually engaged in a suicide attempt, and 49 per cent had been sexually abused. Taken altogether, these data point to the existence of very troubled youths and families.

TABLE 3:6
PROPORTION OF RUNAWAY YOUTH WHO REPORTED HAVING VARIOUS TYPES OF FAMILY PROBLEMS WHEN LAST AT HOME (IN PER CENT)

	PRESENCE/ABSENCE OF PROBLEM		
TYPE OF FAMILY PROBLEM	NO	YES	TOTAL
Verbal Arguments between Parents	16	84	100
Verbal Arguments Between Siblings and Parents	34	66	100
Verbal Arguments between Subject and Parents	10	90	100
Arguments with Parents over Grades at School	50	50	100
Arguments with Parents over Skipping School	42	58	100
Unfair Parental Discipline of Subject	41	59	100
Unfair Parental Discipline of Siblings	62	38	100
Physical Fights between Parents	50	50	100
Physical Fights between Siblings and Parents	65	35	100
Physical Fights between Subject and Parents	34	66	100
Parental Abuse of Alcohol or Drugs	44	56	100
Sibling Abuse of Alcohol or Drugs	60	40	100
Alcohol or Drug Abuse by Subject	24	76	100
Suicide Attempts in Family	50	50	100
Suicide Thoughts by Subject	38	62	100
Suicide Attempts by Subject	48	52	100
Sexual Abuse of Subject	51	49	100

vi) School History:

Over three-fifths of the runaway youths surveyed (62 per cent) were attending school at the time that interviews were conducted (N=125 were 77 attended school and 48 did not). About half of these youths were attending grade school (Grade 9-and-under), and the remainder were in high school (Grades 10 to 12) (48 per cent, 52 per cent, respectively). The proportion of the youths enrolled in each grade level is shown in Table 3:7. Most of the survey participants who were attending school (58 per cent) were in Grade 9 or 10.

TABLE 3:7
GRADE LEVELS OF RUNAWAY YOUTH

	ATTENDING SCHOOL		NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL	
	N	%	N	%
LESS THAN GRADE 6	1	1	2	4
GRADE 6	1	1	1	2
GRADE 7	4	5	2	4
GRADE 8	10	14	4	8
GRADE 9	20	27	21	45
GRADE 10	23	31	10	21
GRADE 11	10	14	4	8
GRADE 12	5	7	4	8
TOTAL	74	100	48	100

The large majority of runaway youths who were no longer attending school (63 per cent) had not gone beyond a Grade 9 level of schooling. The proportion of youths who had completed each grade level is shown in Table 3:7 above.

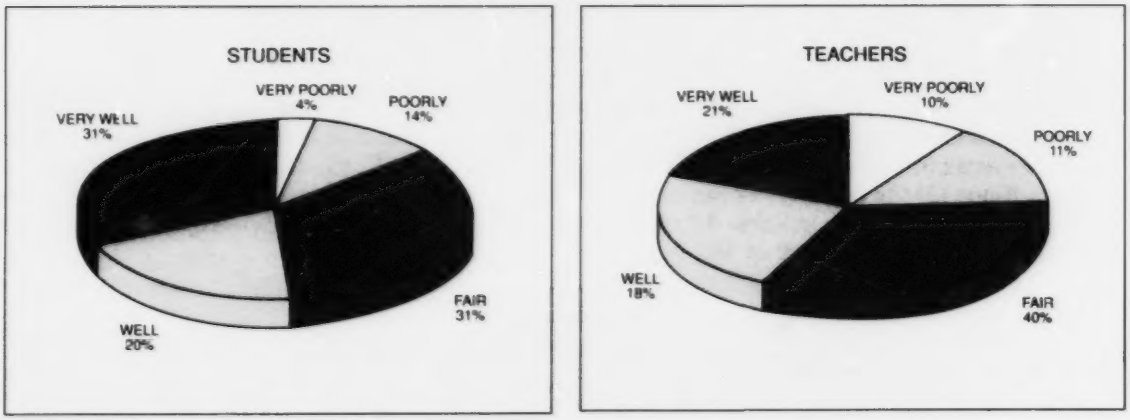
About one-third of the survey participants (32 per cent) rated their school experiences negatively. Twenty-nine per cent of the runaway youths, on the other hand, had neutral assessments of school, indicating that they liked it and disliked it about equally, and 39 per cent reported liking

TABLE 3:8
RUNAWAY YOUTH ASSESSMENTS OF SCHOOL

	N	%
LIKED IT	49	39
LIKED IT AND DISLIKED IT ABOUT EQUALLY	36	29
DISLIKED IT	40	32
TOTAL	125	100

school (Table 3:8). These fairly positive assessments of school are reflected in the runaway youths' assessments of their relationships with fellow students and teachers. As shown in Figures 3:3 and 3:4, only 18 per cent and 21 per cent reported getting along poorly with fellow students and teachers, respectively. On the whole, the survey participants seemed to be fairly well satisfied with school.

FIGURES 3:3 AND 3:4:
RUNAWAY ASSESSMENTS OF HOW THEY GOT ALONG WITH THEIR FELLOW STUDENTS AND TEACHERS



3.1.2 Runaway History

i) Age of First Run:

The majority of runaway youths reported that they were between 12- and 14-years-of-age when they first ran from their home or placement. As shown in Table 3:9, 10 per cent of all runaway youths were 8-years-of-age-and-under at the time of their first run, 18 per cent were 9- to 11-years-of-age,

49 per cent were 12- to 14-years of age and 16 per cent were 15- to 17-years-of-age at the time of their first run. The youngest age at first run, reported by these youths, was 3 years, while the oldest was 17-years-of-age. The average age at which these survey participants first ran was 12-years-of-age.

TABLE 3:9
AGE OF RUNAWAY YOUTH AT FIRST RUN (N=126)

AGE	N	%	AGE	N	%
5 AND UNDER	4	3	11	11	9
6	1	1	12	26	20
7	3	2	13	25	20
8	5	4	14	16	13
9	8	6	15	11	9
10	8	6	16	6	5
			17	2	2

AVERAGE = 12 YEARS MEDIAN = 12 YEARS MODE = 12 YEARS

Gender did not have any effect on the age at which youths first ran. The average age at first run for the males and females did not vary from the total sample average of 12-years-of-age. The age of runaway youths at first run, however, did vary by ethnic background (Table 3:10). Non-Status Natives and Métis first ran at a younger age (average of 11 years) than Treaty Indian or Caucasian youths (averages of 12 years).

TABLE 3:10
ETHNIC BACKGROUND AND AVERAGE AGE OF RUNAWAY YOUTH AT FIRST RUN

CAUCASIAN	12 YEARS
TREATY INDIAN	12 YEARS
NON-STATUS NATIVE/MÉTIS	11 YEARS
OTHER (Black, Asian, East Indian, Latin)	13 YEARS

ii) Total Number of Runs:

Very few of the runaway youths in the survey sample (6 per cent) had been involved in only one runaway incident. As shown in Table 3:11, the majority of runaway youths (67 per cent) had participated in more than five runaway episodes since the start of their runaway career.

TABLE 3:11
TOTAL NUMBER OF RUNS ENGAGED IN BY RUNAWAY YOUTH (N=127)

NUMBER	N	%	NUMBER	N	%
ONE	7	6	FOUR	10	8
TWO	6	5	FIVE	10	8
THREE	8	6	> FIVE	86	67

Table 3:12 presents a more refined breakdown of the total number of runs engaged in by runaway youths. The largest proportion of youths (36 per cent) were involved in 1 - 5 runs, 25 per cent were involved in 6 - 10 runs, 12 per cent in 11 - 15 runs, 10 per cent in 16 - 20 runs and 17 per cent in over 20 runs. The largest number of runs, reported by three survey participants, was 100 runs. On average, the sample of runaway youths had engaged in a total of 15 runs. However, because this

average was likely skewed by the extremely high values in the distribution, the median is probably the best measure of central tendency to use in this case. The median value for the total sample of runaway youths was 9 runs, which indicates that half of the youths engaged in less-than-nine runs, and the other half in more-than-nine runaway episodes.

TABLE 3:12
TOTAL NUMBER OF RUNS ENGAGED IN BY RUNAWAY YOUTH (N = 118)

NUMBER OF RUNS	N	%
1 - 5	41	36
6 - 10	30	25
11 - 15	14	12
16 - 20	12	10
21 - 25	5	4
26 - 30	6	5
OVER 30	10	8
AVERAGE = 15 RUNS	MEDIAN = 9 RUNS	MODE = 6 RUNS

Gender, age and ethnic background of runaway youths had an effect on the total number of runs in which they engaged. Table 3:13 indicates that females were involved in more runaway episodes than males. The median number of runs for females was 10, compared to 6 runs for males. Age and number of runaway episodes were related in a curvilinear fashion, as shown in Table 3:14.

TABLE 3:13
GENDER BY TOTAL NUMBER OF RUNS ENGAGED IN BY RUNAWAY YOUTH (N = 118)

	NUMBER OF RUNS			
GENDER	AVERAGE	MEDIAN	MODE	TOTAL
MALE	14	6	6	(N=46)
FEMALE	15	10	10	(N=72)

TABLE 3:14
AGE AT TIME OF INTERVIEW BY TOTAL NUMBER OF RUNS ENGAGED IN BY RUNAWAY YOUTH (N = 118)

	NUMBER OF RUNS			
AGE	AVERAGE	MEDIAN	MODE	TOTAL
13 AND UNDER	16	5	4	(N= 9)
14	12	11	10	(N=10)
15	21	14	1	(N=22)
16	18	10	6	(N=25)
17	11	9	5	(N=16)
18 AND OVER	10	6	6	(N=36)

Youths in the youngest and oldest age categories had the lowest median values (5, 6 runs, respectively), while the 15-year-olds had the highest number of runs (median = 14 runs). And youths who were Non-Status Native/Métis or Treaty Indian participated in more runs (median values of 10 runs, respectively) than Caucasian youths (median = 7 runs) (Table 3:15).

TABLE 3:15
ETHNIC BACKGROUND AND TOTAL NUMBER OF RUNS ENGAGED IN BY RUNAWAY YOUTH (N = 116)

	NUMBER OF RUNS			
ETHNIC BACKGROUND	AVERAGE	MEDIAN	MODE	TOTAL
CAUCASIAN	13	7	3	(N=42)
TREATY INDIAN	12	10	5	(N=23)
NON-STATUS NATIVE/ MÉTIS	18	10	6	(N=42)
OTHER (Black, Asian East Indian, Latin)	16	6	1	(N= 9)

The number of runs in which runaway youths engaged was also related to the origin of their most recent run (Table 3:16). In other words, youths who had most recently run from a placement or locked facility participated in more runaway episodes than those who had left a parental home (median = 5 runs). If it can be assumed that the origins of the youths' runs have been fairly consistent over time (in terms of the broad categories parental versus placement), then these data suggest that youths who run from placements do so more frequently than youths who run from parental homes. Of course, if this pattern does indeed exist, it may be explained, in part, by the response of parents and social service agencies to runaway behaviour. If youths are placed away from home fairly early in their runaway careers, it would logically follow that their runs would most often originate from placements or locked facilities.

TABLE 3:16
TYPE OF LIVING ARRANGEMENT FROM WHICH YOUTH RAN IN MOST RECENT RUNAWAY EPISODE BY TOTAL NUMBER OF RUNS ENGAGED IN BY RUNAWAY YOUTH (N = 118)

	NUMBER OF RUNS			
ORIGIN OF RUN	AVERAGE	MEDIAN	MODE	TOTAL
TWO-PARENT HOME	11	5	6	(N=31)
ONE-PARENT HOME	5	5	2	(N=14)
RELATIVE	4	4	3	(N= 2)
FOSTER HOME	16	20	20	(N=17)
GROUP HOME/ RECEIVING HOME	18	11	4	(N=33)
LOCKED FACILITY	20	14	10	(N=19)
OTHER	24	24	7	(N= 2)

iii) Recency of Last Run:

At the time that interviews were conducted, the majority of runaway youths in the survey sample age 17-and-under (55 per cent), reported that they had engaged in their most recent runaway episode no longer than three months ago, as shown in Table 3:17. If the recency of the last run accurately reflects the length of time that usually separates runaway episodes, this would seem to indicate that the living arrangements of the majority of runaway youths in this sample were very sporadic in nature.

TABLE 3:17
LENGTH OF TIME SINCE LAST RUN BY GENDER OF RUNAWAY YOUTH (RUNAWAY YOUTH AGE 17 AND UNDER)

LENGTH OF TIME SINCE LAST RUN	N	%	MALE %	FEMALE %
LESS THAN 1 MONTH	16	19	12	23
BETWEEN 1 - 3 MTHS	31	36	27	42
BETWEEN 4 - 6 MTHS	16	19	27	14
BETWEEN 7 - 9 MTHS	3	4		
BETWEEN 10 - 12 MTHS	5	6	34	21
MORE THAN A YEAR	14	16		
TOTAL	85	100	N=33	N=52

Table 3:17 further indicates that this lack of stability of permanence in living situation appeared to be more prevalent among female runaways. The data revealed that females age 17-and-under had engaged in their last runaway episode much more recently than males. Twenty-three per cent of all females reported that they had run less than one month ago, compared to 12 per cent of all males. Similarly, 42 per cent of all females indicated that they had run 1 - 3 months ago, compared to 27 per cent of all males. On the other hand, 27 per cent of all males reported that they had run 4 - 6 months ago, compared to 14 per cent of all females. And 34 per cent of all males indicated that their last run had occurred more than 6 months ago, compared to 21 per cent of all females. Given that females have been involved in more runaway episodes than males, it might have been expected that they would have been more recently involved as well.

3.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RUN

Almost all of the youths in the survey sample (94 per cent) had been involved in multiple incidents of runaway behaviour. Because many of these youths had lengthy runaway histories, the survey questions pertaining to characteristics of the run were focused on their most recent runaway episode. The circumstances surrounding the runaway youths' last run are described below.

i) Location of Run:

Over four-fifths of the runaway youths in the survey sample (82 per cent) had run from a home or placement located in Winnipeg (Table 3:18). Eleven per cent had run to Winnipeg from other Manitoba locations, 5 per cent were from out-of-province, and 2 per cent of the runaway youths had come to Winnipeg from out-of-country. As shown in Table 3:19, about half of the thirteen youths who came to Winnipeg from rural Manitoba (N=6) had most recently run from a parental or relative's home, while the remainder (N=7) had left a placement. Four of the six youths who came to Winnipeg from out-of-province had left a parental home, while both of the runaway youths from out-of-Canada had left a placement.

TABLE 3:18
LOCATION OF HOME/PLACEMENT FROM WHICH YOUTH RAN IN MOST RECENT RUNAWAY EPISODE (N = 127)

LOCATION RUN FROM	N	%
WINNIPEG	106	82
OTHER MANITOBA LOCATION		
Small City	5	4
Small Town	7	6
Reserve	1	1
OUT OF PROVINCE	6	5
OUT OF CANADA	2	2

TABLE 3:19
LOCATION OF HOME/PLACEMENT THAT YOUTH RAN FROM IN MOST RECENT RUNAWAY EPISODE BY TYPE OF LIVING ARRANGEMENT RUN FROM (IN PER CENT) (N = 127)

	ORIGIN OF RUN						
LOCATION	TWO-PARENT HOME	ONE-PARENT HOME	RELA-TIVE	FOSTER HOME	GROUP HOME	LOCKED FACILITY	OTHER
WINNIPEG	85 (28)	73 (11)	50 (1)	77 (14)	83 (31)	100 (19)	67 (2)
OTHER MB LOCATION	12 (4)	7 (1)	50 (1)	17 (3)	11 (4)	0 (0)	0 (0)
OUT OF PROVINCE	3 (1)	20 (3)	0 (0)	6 (1)	3 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)
OUT OF CANADA	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (1)	0 (0)	33 (1)

ii) Type of Living Arrangement Run From:

Table 3:20 describes the type of living arrangements from which the runaway youths ran during their most recent runaway episode. The data indicate that 41 per cent of the runaway youths in the survey sample had last run from a parental or relative's home: 27 per cent of all runs involved a two-parent family, 12 per cent a one-parent family and 2 per cent a relative. About two-thirds of these runs from home (66 per cent) originated from two-parent families. In contrast, 59 per cent of the runaway youths had last run from a placement: 14 per cent of all runs originated from a foster home, 28 per cent from a group home, 15 per cent from a locked facility and 2 per cent from other types of living arrangements. About half of these runs from a placement (48 per cent) originated from group homes. Overall, the findings indicate that the majority of runaway youths (55 per cent) had most recently run from either a two-parent home or a group home.

TABLE 3:20
TYPE OF LIVING ARRANGEMENT THAT YOUTH RAN FROM IN MOST RECENT RUNAWAY EPISODE (N = 127)

LIVING ARRANGEMENT	N	%
TWO-PARENT HOME		
* Both Natural Parents	16	13
* Natural Mother & Stepfather	10	8
* Natural Father & Stepmother	2	2
* Adoptive	5	4
ONE-PARENT HOME		
* Single Mother	14	11
* Single Father	1	1
RELATIVE	2	2
FOSTER HOME	18	14
GROUP HOME/RECEIVING HOME	37	28
LOCKED FACILITY	19	15
OTHER	3	2

iii) Length of Residency at Home/Placement:

About four-fifths of the runaway youths in the survey sample (82 per cent) had been living at the home or placement from which they most recently ran for no longer than a one-year period, prior to running. As shown in Table 3:21, 11 per cent of all runaway youths had been living at their home or placement for less than a month and 50 per cent had resided at their home or placement for 1-to-12 months before leaving. About one-fifth of the runaway youths (18 per cent) had somewhat more permanent living arrangements prior to their last run. Nine per cent of all youths had lived at their home or placement for 2-to-5 years before running, while another nine per cent had been at their place of residence for 10-years-or-more before their last run.

TABLE 3:21
LENGTH OF TIME THAT YOUTH HAD BEEN LIVING IN HOME/PLACEMENT BEFORE RUNNING (MOST RECENT RUNAWAY EPISODE)

LENGTH OF TIME	N	%
LESS THAN A WEEK	14	11
LESS THAN A MONTH		
* 1 Week	8	7
* 2 Weeks	11	9
* 3 Weeks	6	5
BETWEEN 1 AND 12 MONTHS		
* 1 TO 3 Months	30	25
* 4 to 6 Months	21	17
* 7 to 9 Months	6	5
* 10 to 12 Months	4	3
BETWEEN 2 AND 5 YEARS	11	9
10 YEARS OR MORE	11	9
AVERAGE = 1.7 YEARS (619 Days)		
MEDIAN = 3 MONTHS (90 Days)		
MODE = 6 MONTHS (180 Days)		

The data indicate that, on average, these runaway youth had stayed at their home or placement for about 619 days, or 1.7 years, before engaging in their most recent runaway episode. However, because this average is likely skewed by the extremely high values in the distribution, the median is probably the best measure of central tendency to use here. The median value for the sample of runaway youth is 90 days or three months--which indicates that half of the youth had been at their place of residence for less than three months prior to their last run, and the other half for more than three months. These results are consistent with the earlier finding, that the majority of youths had engaged in their most recent runaway episode no longer than three months ago, and lend further support to the notion that the living arrangements of these youths are very unsettled in nature.

Although the great majority of runaway youths seem to lack stability, or permanence, in their living situation, Table 3:22 suggests that youths are willing to stay longer in certain types of living arrangements than others.[19] Comparisons of the median number of days that youths lived in each type of living arrangement before running, indicate that these runaway youths remained in two-parent homes for the longest period of time (median = 180 days or six months) and in locked facilities for the shortest period of time (median = 30 days or one month).

[19] The runs which originated from a relative's home or other living arrangement are not included in these, or any other, comparisons because of the small number of responses.

TABLE 3:22
TYPE OF LIVING ARRANGEMENT THAT YOUTH RAN FROM IN MOST RECENT RUNAWAY EPISODE BY LENGTH OF TIME YOUTH HAD BEEN LIVING THERE (IN DAYS) (N = 122)

	NUMBER OF DAYS			
ORIGIN OF RUN	(MIN, MAX)	AVERAGE	MEDIAN	TOTAL
TWO-PARENT HOME	(4, 6,120)	1,380	180	(N=33)
ONE-PARENT HOME	(1, 5,760)	1,176	98	(N=14)
RELATIVE	(3, 45)	24	24	(N= 2)
FOSTER HOME	(2, 180)	75	75	(N=17)
GROUP HOME/ RECEIVING HOME	(1, 1,800)	268	120	(N=36)
LOCKED FACILITY	(7, 900)	134	30	(N=18)
OTHER	(45, 90)	68	68	(N= 2)

iv) School Attendance:

Nearly three-fifths of the runaway youths in the survey sample (58 per cent) were attending school at the time of their last run from home or placement (N = 124, 72 attending and 52 not attending). The youths who most recently ran from a placement were more likely to be attending school at the time (60 per cent) than those who ran from a parental home (54 per cent) (Table 3:23).

TABLE 3:23
WHETHER YOUTH WAS ATTENDING SCHOOL BY ORIGIN OF RUN BEFORE MOST RECENT RUNAWAY EPISODE (IN PER CENT) (N =124)

IN SCHOOL	HOME	PLACEMENT
NO	46	40
YES	54	60

v) Reasons for Running:

The great majority of runaway youths who left a parental home (78 per cent) indicated that they ran because of problems at home. As shown in Table 3:24, 40 per cent of these youths reported that they were generally dissatisfied with their home situation, while the remaining 38 per cent outlined more specifically the problems which they saw in their parent-child relationships (e.g. lack of trust, communication, support). A small proportion of the youths who ran from home (18 per cent) indicated that they ran in search of freedom, adventure and good times. One of the two remaining youths reported that things were fine at home, while the other left home to make things financially easier for her mother.

TABLE 3:24
REASONS WHY RUNAWAY YOUTH LEFT HOME IN MOST RECENT RUNAWAY EPISODE

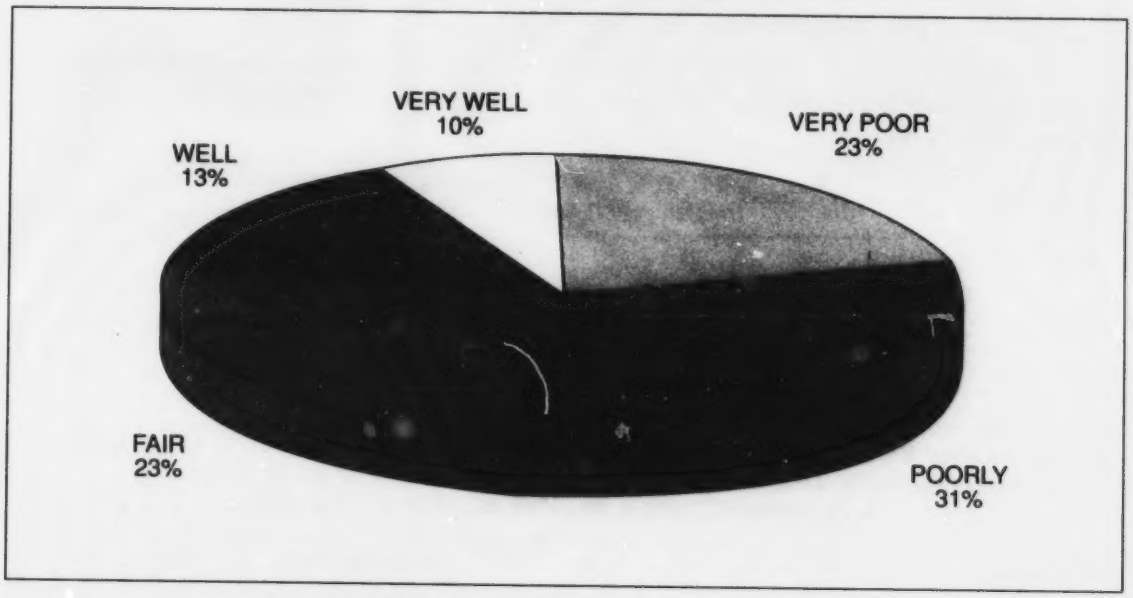
REASONS	N	%
RUNNING AWAY AS AN ESCAPE		
* Parents don't care, lack of trust, no communication, no support	7	14
* Unrealistic expectations, fights and arguments with parents	6	12
* Problems with Step-parent	3	6
* Alcohol Abuse by Parent	1	2
* Physical/Sexual Abuse	2	4
* General Dissatisfaction with Home	19	40
	(38)	(78)
RUNNING AWAY TO FREEDOM, ADVENTURE AND GOOD TIMES		
* Home was okay but wanted freedom	4	8
* Bored wanted adventure	3	6
* Wanted to live with boyfriend	2	4
	(9)	(18)
OTHER	(2)	(4)
TOTAL	49	100

TABLE 3:25
FAMILY PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY RUNAWAY YOUTH WHO LEFT HOME IN MOST RECENT RUNAWAY EPISODE (IN PER CENT)

	PRESENCE/ABSENCE OF PROBLEM		
TYPE OF FAMILY PROBLEM	NO	YES	TOTAL
Verbal Arguments between Parents	19	81	100
Verbal Arguments between Siblings & Parents	6	94	100
Verbal Arguments between Subject & Parents	40	60	100
Arguments w Parents over Grades at School	35	65	100
Arguments w Parents over Skipping School	36	64	100
Unfair Parental Discipline of Siblings	64	36	100
Physical Fights between Parents	58	42	100
Physical Fights between Siblings & Parents	73	27	100
Physical Fights between Subject & Parents	33	67	100
Parental Abuse of Alcohol or Drugs	48	52	100
Sibling Abuse of Alcohol or Drugs	64	36	100
Alcohol or Drug Abuse by Subject	31	69	100
Suicide Attempts in Family	49	51	100
Suicide Thoughts by Subject	35	65	100
Suicide Attempts by Subject	46	54	100
Sexual Abuse of Subject	56	44	100

Table 3:25 confirms that youths who left parental homes were experiencing various types of family problems. According to their self-reports, these youths had problems as well: 65 per cent reported having arguments with their parents over skipping school, 69 per cent reported that they abused alcohol or drugs and 54 per cent indicated that they had attempted suicide. The majority of these runaway youths who ran from a parental home (54 per cent) indicated that, on the whole, they got along poorly with their families (Figure 3.5)

FIGURE 3:5
RUNAWAY YOUTH ASSESSMENT OF HOW THEY GOT ALONG WITH THEIR FAMILIES FOR THOSE YOUTH WHO LEFT HOME IN MOST RECENT RUNAWAY EPISODE (N=48)



Similarly, about three-quarters of the runaway youths who left a placement (73 per cent) indicated that they ran because they were unhappy with their living situation. As shown in Table 3:26, 44 per cent of these youths reported that they were generally dissatisfied with their placements. When asked how things had been at their placements they responded: "not so good"; "awful, no privacy"; "it was boring being locked up"; "I was scared and confused"; "it was bizarre--too tense"; "I hated being treated like a criminal"; "good rules but staff not strict enough"; and, "I didn't want to be there." The remaining 29 per cent of these youths outlined specific problems which they had with care providers and other youths in placement. Again, a small proportion of youth who ran from a placement (15 per cent) indicated that they ran in search of freedom and adventure.

Other reasons for running, mentioned by the nine remaining youths, included: "not wanting to 'act' the part in placement like other kids"; "caught stealing"; "missed mother"; "conditions in lock-up: food poisoning, no privacy, horrible bedtimes" and, "friends talked me into running." Four youths indicated that things were "not bad" in placement.

Table 3:27 presents a somewhat more positive assessment of placements by these runaway youths. Although 42 per cent of the youths who left placements reported that they disliked their living situation, the majority had neutral (46 per cent) or positive (12 per cent) feelings about their placement. However, the data confirm that about one-quarter of youth who run from placements have problems getting along with their care providers.

TABLE 3:26
REASONS WHY RUNAWAY YOUTH LEFT PLACEMENT
MOST RECENT RUNAWAY EPISODE

REASONS	NO	%
RUNNING AWAY AS AN ESCAPE		
* Care providers don't care, lack of trust, lack of communication	4	5
* Didn't like care providers and/or programs	14	18
* Didn't get along with other youth in placement	3	4
* Disliked rural placement	1	1
* Alcohol Abuse by Foster Parent	1	1
* General Dissatisfaction with Placement	33	44
	(56)	(73)
RUNNING AWAY TO FREEDOM, ADVENTURE AND GOOD TIMES		
* Wanted Freedom	11	14
* Wanted to see Boyfriend	1	1
	(12)	(15)
OTHER	(9)	(12)
	====	====
TOTAL	77	100

TABLE 3:27
RUNAWAY YOUTH ASSESSMENTS OF THEIR PLACEMENT AND HOW THEY GOT ALONG WITH THEIR CARE PROVIDERS FOR THOSE YOUTH WHO LEFT A PLACEMENT MOST RECENT RUNAWAY EPISODE

ASSESSMENT	N	%	GOT ALONG	N	%
LIKED IT	9	12	VERY POORLY	6	8
LIKED IT & DISLIKED			POORLY	14	18
IT ABOUT EQUALLY	36	46	FAIRLY WELL	22	29
DISLIKED IT	32	42	WELL	18	23
			VERY WELL	17	22
TOTAL	77	100			

On the whole, the findings suggest that youth who leave placements are more ambivalent in their assessments of their living situations than those who leave parental homes. Youth who leave home seem to be more certain about their dissatisfaction.

vi) Departure from Home/Placement:

About three-quarters of the runaway youths in the survey sample (74 per cent) left their homes or placements by themselves (Table 3:28). Those who were accompanied in their run usually left with a friend (18 per cent), 6 per cent of all youths ran with a boy/girlfriend and 2 per cent with a sibling. Youths who ran from locked facilities were most often accompanied on their run, while those who ran from foster homes were the least likely to have a partner (Table 3:29).

TABLE 3:28
WHETHER YOUTH RAN BY SELF OR ACCOMPANIED IN MOST RECENT RUNAWAY EPISODE (N = 127)

	N	%
SELF	94	74
ACCOMPANIED		
• Friend	23	18
• Boy/Girlfriend	7	6
• Sibling	3	2
• Relative	0	0

TABLE 3:29
WHETHER YOUTH RAN BY SELF OR ACCOMPANIED IN MOST RECENT RUNAWAY EPISODE BY TYPE OF LIVING ARRANGEMENT RUN FROM (IN PERCENT)

	ORIGIN OF RUN						
ACCOMPANIED	TWO-PARENT HOME	ONE-PARENT HOME	RE-LATIVE	FOSTER HOME	GROUP HOME	LOCKED FACILITY	OTHER
NO	82	73	50	94	65	63	67
YES	18	27	50	6	35	37	23
N	(33)	(15)	(2)	(18)	(37)	(19)	(3)

Only 16 per cent of the runaway youths did ***not*** contact someone for help when they first left their home or placement. The majority of youths who sought help contacted a friend (52 per cent), 25 per cent asked a boy/girlfriend for help, 11 per cent a relative, 5 per cent a parent, 3 per cent a professional and 4 per cent sought help from other sources (Table 3:30).

TABLE 3:30
FIRST PERSON YOUTH CONTACTED FOR HELP IN MOST RECENT RUNAWAY EPISODE• (N = 106)

CONTACTED	N	%
FRIEND	55	52
BOY/GIRLFRIEND	27	25
RELATIVE	12	11
PARENT	5	5
PROFESSIONAL	3	3
OTHER	4	4

• Twenty youth reported that they did not seek help when they first left their home/placement.

Similarly, over two-thirds of the runaway youths reported that they went to a friend's (44 per cent) or boy/girlfriend's place (25 per cent) after first leaving their home or placement (Table 3:31). Clearly, these data indicate that the runaway youths in this survey sample made almost exclusive use of informal helping networks during their most recent runaway episode.

TABLE 3:31
FIRST PLACE THAT YOUTH ENDED UP GOING IN MOST RECENT RUNAWAY EPISODE (N = 126)

	N	%
FRIEND'S	56	44
BOY/GIRLFRIEND'S	31	25
RELATIVE'S	9	7
PARENT'S	4	3
STREET	**19**	**15**
OTHER	7	6

vii) Length of Time On-the-Run:

The large majority of runaway youths (68 per cent) were away for less than one month during their most recent runaway episode, as shown in Table 3:32. On average, the runaway youths in the sample were away from their home or placements for about 46 days or 1.5 months. However, because this average is likely skewed by the high values in the distribution, the median is probably a better measure of the length of time that the youths were on-the-run. The median value for the sample of runaway youths is 10 days or 1.5 weeks--which indicated that half of the youths were on-the-run for less-than-10-days, and the other half for more-than-10-days.

TABLE 3:32
LENGTH OF TIME THAT YOUTH WAS ON-THE-RUN IN MOST RECENT RUNAWAY EPISODE (RUNAWAY YOUTH AGE 17 AND UNDER) (N = 88)

LENGTH OF TIME AWAY	N	%
LESS THAN A WEEK		
• 1 Day	6	7
• 2 Days	4	5
• 3 Days	9	10
• 4 Days	5	6
• 5 Days	2	2
• 6 Days	0	0
LESS THAN A MONTH		
• 1 Week	20	22
• 2 Weeks	6	7
• 3 Weeks	8	9
BETWEEN 1 & 12 MONTHS		
• 1 - 3 Months	16	18
• 4 - 6 Months	6	7
• 7 - 9 Months	4	5
• 10 - 12 Months	1	1
MORE THAN A YEAR	1	1
AVERAGE = 1.5 MONTHS (46 Days)		
MEDIAN = 1.5 WEEKS (10 Days)		
MODE = 1.0 WEEKS (7 Days)		

The length of time that runaway youths were away from their homes or placements was found to vary by their socio-demographic characteristics and the origin of the run. As shown in Table 3:33, females were on-the-run for longer periods of time than males. The median value for females was 14 days, compared to 7 days for males. Older runaways also stayed away from their homes or placements for longer periods of time. The median number of days that youths, in each age category, were on-the-run is shown in Table 3:33. This table shows that Treaty Indians were on-the-run for longer periods of time than runaway youths in all other ethnic categories (excluding the "other"

category from consideration because of the small number of responses). The median number of days on-the-run for Treaty Indians was 16 days, compared to 14 days for Caucasian youths and 10 days for Non-Status Natives/Métis. Finally, the number of days that youths were on-the-run varied by the type of living arrangement from which they had run. As shown in Table 3:34, youths who ran from a two-parent home were on-the-run for the longest period of time (median = 21 days), while those who left a group home had the shortest runs (median = 7 days).

TABLE 3:33
GENDER, AGE (AT THE TIME OF INTERVIEW) AND ETHNIC BACKGROUND BY LENGTH OF TIME THAT RUNAWAY YOUTH WAS ON-THE-RUN (IN DAYS) (YOUTH AGE 17-AND-UNDER ONLY)

	NUMBER OF DAYS			
	(MIN, MAX)	AVERAGE	MEDIAN	TOTAL
GENDER				(N=88)
MALE	(1, 240)	38	7	(N=34)
FEMALE	(1, 540)	51	14	(N=54)
AGE				(N=88)
13 AND UNDER	(1, 90)	15	7	(N= 9)
14	(3, 30)	9	7	(N=11)
15	(1, 540)	52	10	(N=23)
16	(1, 360)	62	14	(N=25)
17	(2, 240)	54	30	(N=20)
ETHNIC BACKGROUND				(N=86)
CAUCASIAN	(1, 240)	25	14	(N=27)
TREATY INDIAN	(1, 360)	49	16	(N=18)
NON-STATUS INDIAN/ MÉTIS	(1, 540)	56	10	(N=33)
OTHER (Black, Asian East Indian, Latin)	(1, 270)	77	19	(N= 8)

TABLE 3:34
TYPE OF LIVING ARRANGEMENT THAT YOUTH RAN FROM IN MOST RECENT RUNAWAY EPISODE BY LENGTH OF TIME THAT YOUTH WAS ON-THE-RUN (IN DAYS) (YOUTH AGE 17-AND-UNDER) (N = 88)

	NUMBER OF DAYS			
ORIGIN OF RUN	(MIN, MAX)	AVERAGE	MEDIAN	TOTAL
TWO-PARENT HOME	(1, 270)	63	21	(N=20)
ONE-PARENT HOME	(1, 540)	92	12	(N= 9)
RELATIVE	(3, 30)	17	17	(N= 2)
FOSTER HOME	(2, 90)	23	14	(N=12)
GROUP HOME/RECEIVING H.	(1, 240)	27	7	(N=29)
LOCKED FACILITY	(1, 360)	58	10	(N=15)
OTHER	(3)	3	3	(N= 1)

viii) Resolution of the Run:

At the time that interviews were conducted, about one-quarter of the runaway youths in the survey sample (26 per cent) had returned to the same living arrangements from which they had most recently run. As shown in Table 3:35, 8 per cent of these youths had returned to a parental home and 18 per cent to a placement or locked facility. Eight of the 11 youths who returned home did so voluntarily, none were returned by the police or social workers, and three returned under other

circumstances (e.g., after a period of time in other living arrangements or placements; under threat of the police being called). In contrast, 13 of the 22 youths who returned to a placement/locked facility did so voluntarily, eight were returned by the police or social workers, and one returned after group home staff threatened to call the police. Overall, 21 of the 33 youths (64 per cent) who had returned to the home or placement from which they last ran, had done so on their own.

TABLE 3:35
RESOLUTION OF MOST RECENT RUNAWAY EPISODE (N = 126)

TYPE OF RESOLUTION	N	%
RETURNED TO **SAME** PLACE RAN FROM		
• Two-Parent Home	8	6
• One-Parent Home	3	2
• Relative	0	0
• Foster Home	1	1
• Group Home/Receiving Home	10	8
• Locked Facility	11	9
LIVING AT A **DIFFERENT** PLACE THAN THE ONE RAN FROM		
• Two-Parent Home	2	2
• One-Parent Home	2	2
• Relative	4	3
• Foster Home	11	9
• Boy/Girlfriend's	4	3
• With Strangers	0	0
• Foster Home	7	6
• Group Home/Receiving Home	11	9
• Locked Facility	20	16
• Public Facility/Abandoned Building	0	0
• **On the Street**	**4**	**3**
• On Own	24	18
• Other	4	3

The remaining 74 per cent of the runaway youths in the survey sample were living at a different place than the one from which they had most recently run. Eighteen per cent were living on their own, 16 per cent were in a locked facility, 15 per cent in a foster or group home, 12 per cent with a friend or boy/girlfriend, 7 per cent with a parent or relative and 3 per cent were in other types of living arrangements. Only 3 per cent of the youths in the sample were living on the street at the time that the surveys were being conducted.

An important question which arises here is whether the runaway youths were, indeed, satisfied with the manner in which their most recent runaway episode was resolved. In other words, are they happy with their current living arrangements? The types of living arrangements that are desired by runaway youths are shown in Table 3:36. Table 3:37 examines how often there is a correspondence between desired and actual living arrangements.

TABLE 3:36
DESIRED LIVING ARRANGEMENTS OF RUNAWAY YOUTH (N = 124)

LIVING ARRANGEMENT	N	%
BOTH PARENTS	11	9
MOTHER	12	10
FATHER	11	9
SIBLING	3	2
EXTENDED FAMILY	6	5
ON OWN	34	27
BOY/GIRLFRIEND	23	19
FRIEND	16	13
FOSTER HOME	5	4
OTHER	3	2

About one-third of the runaway youths in the sample (35 per cent) indicated that they would like to be residing with immediate or extended family members, 32 per cent said that they would like to live with a friend or boy/girlfriend, 27 per cent wished to be on their own, 4 percent in a foster home and 2 per cent of all youths mentioned other types of desired living arrangements.

TABLE 3:37
DESIRED LIVING ARRANGEMENTS OF RUNAWAY YOUTH BY LIVING ARRANGEMENTS AT TIME OF INTERVIEW (IN PERCENT) (N = 124)

	ACTUAL LIVING ARRANGEMENT							
DESIRED LIVING ARRANGEMENT	FAMILY	FOSTER HOME	GROUP HOME	LOCKED FACILITY	FRIEND OR BOY/GIRL FRIEND	STREET	ON OWN	OTHER
FAMILY	37	25	42	46	33	**25**	17	33
	(7)	(2)	(9)	(14)	(5	**(1)**	(4)	(1)
ON OWN	26	25	14	17	27	**75**	50	0
	(5)	(2)	(3)	(5)	(4)	**(3)**	(12)	(0)
FRIEND OR BOY/GIRL FRIEND	32	13	29	37	40	**0**	29	67
	(6)	(1)	(6)	(11)	(6)	**(0)**	(7)	(2)
FOSTER HOME	0	37	5	0	0	**0**	4	4
	(0)	(3)	(1)	(0)	(0)	**(0)**	(1)	(0)
OTHER	5	0	10	0	0	**0**	0	0
	(1)	(0)	(2)	(0)	(0)	**(0)**	(0)	(0)
N =	19	8	21	30	15	**4**	24	3

As shown in Table 3:37, only about one-quarter of all youths (28/124 or 23 per cent) were actually living where they desired to live. None of the youths who were living in group homes, or locked facilities, wanted to be living there--the largest proportion of these youths wanted to reside with family. None of the youths who lived on the street wanted to be there either--three of these four youths wanted to live on their own. Although half of the youths who were living on their own were pleased with that arrangement, most of the others wished that they were living with a friend or boy/girlfriend. Similarly, most of the youths who did not want to be living with family expressed a desire to live with a friend or boy/girlfriend. On the other hand, most of the youths who did not want to be living with a friend or boy/girlfriend wished that they were living with family. And, finally, those youths who did not want to be living in foster homes expressed a preference for independent living and living with family. This general dissatisfaction with current living arrangements does not seem to bode well in terms of the potential on the part of these youths for re-involvement in runaway behaviour.

3.3 YOUTH EXPERIENCES WHILE ON-THE-RUN

Having described the circumstances surrounding the youths' most recent runaway episode, the analysis in this section broadens in scope to include a discussion of the totality of the youths' runaway experiences. In other words, the task at hand becomes one of describing what it has meant, in practical terms, for these youths to be on-the-run from their homes or placements. Obviously, one critical area of concern centres around the extent to which runaway youths are able to meet their basic needs for food and shelter while on-the-run. No less important are the illegal activities and health-risk behaviours which may be prompted, in part, by their runaway status. The following analysis reveals how well or poorly the runaway youth in the survey sample fared in these areas.

i) Food:

Over one-third of the runaway youth in the survey sample (38 per cent) reported that they had gone without food on at least one occasion in the course of their runaway history (N = 125, 78 had never gone without food and 47 had). The overwhelming majority of these youths (83 per cent), however, had never sought help from anyone to assist with this need (N = 47, 39 had never sought help and 8 had). They offered a number of reasons for not seeking help: the most common reason

mentioned was that they were too proud and stubborn to ask for help and that they wanted to do things on their own (16 of 39 responses, or 40 per cent); the second most frequent reason was the fear of being caught (21 per cent); 13 per cent of the reasons had to do with a lack of knowledge of where to go for help; 13 per cent did not want to bother anyone or were too shy or embarrassed to seek help; 5 per cent were not confident that anyone would help, and the remaining 8 per cent did not seek help to obtain food because they had no appetite or were too drunk to eat. Overall, it appears that most of these youths chose to go hungry rather than seek help because of pride and independence issues, as well as the fear of apprehension by police or social workers. Of the few youths who did seek help (N=8), only one contacted a social service agency (P.O.W.E.R.).

The remaining 62 per cent of the runaway youth in the survey sample reported that they had never gone without food while on-the-run. As shown in Table 3:38, the majority of these youths (51 per cent) had obtained food from friends, 5 per cent from relatives and 9 per cent from friends and relatives. A few youths (9 per cent) were employed or had their own money. Twenty-five per cent of these youths, however, reported that they had engaged in illegal activities to meet their need for food. Table 3:39 confirms that the majority of runaway youths had been involved in shoplifting (72 per cent), fraud (58 per cent), drug dealing (56 per cent) and theft (51 per cent) while on-the-run.

TABLE 3:38
HOW RUNAWAY YOUTH OBTAINED FOOD WHILE ON-THE-RUN (N = 78)

HOW FOOD WAS OBTAINED	N	%
FRIENDS	39	51
RELATIVES	4	5
FRIENDS AND RELATIVES	7	9
EMPLOYMENT/OWN MONEY	7	9
ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES	13	17
FRIENDS AND ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES	5	6
EMPLOYMENT AND ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES	1	1
ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES AND FOOD BANK	1	1
OTHER	1	1

TABLE 3:39
PROPORTION OF RUNAWAY YOUTH WHO PARTICIPATED IN VARIOUS TYPES OF ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES WHILE ON-THE-RUN (IN PERCENT)

	PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITY		
TYPE OF ILLEGAL ACTIVITY	NO	YES	TOTAL
PROSTITUTION	68	32	100
DRUG DEALING	44	56	100
THEFT	49	51	100
ROBBERY	71	29	100
JOYRIDING	58	42	100
SHOPLIFTING	28	72	100
FORGERY	72	28	100
FRAUD	42	58	100

Overall, it appears that almost all of the runaway youths who never experienced hunger while on-the-run were able to have their needs met through informal helping networks (65 per cent) or illegal means (25 per cent). Again, assistance from social service agencies is notably absent. Only one youth mentioned using a food bank.

ii) Shelter:

About one-third (32 per cent) of the runaway youths surveyed reported having slept on the street at least once in the course of their runaway history (Table 3:40). Most of these youths (63 per cent)

had never had anywhere else but the street to go to, while the others had divided their time between the street and the homes of friends or relatives. Nevertheless, most of the youths in the survey sample (62 per cent) indicated that they had usually stayed with friends, boy/girlfriends or relatives while on-the-run. Because 20 per cent of the runaway youths (N = 97, 19 youth said yes and 78 said no) have reported exchanging sexual favours for a place to stay, there seems to be good reason to believe that at least a portion of these residences are not desirable places of shelter for runaway youths.

TABLE 3:40
WHERE RUNAWAY YOUTH USUALLY SLEPT WHILE ON-THE-RUN (N = 123)

USUAL SLEEPING PLACE	N	%
SIGNIFICANT OTHERS ONLY		
Friends	47	38
Relatives	5	4
Boy/Girlfriend	9	7
Combinations	16	13
SIGNIFICANT OTHERS AND STREET	15	12
STREET ONLY	**24**	**20**
OTHER (Hotel, Friends & Hotel)	7	6

Only about one-quarter of the runaway youths (26 per cent) felt that the sleeping arrangements which they had while on-the-run were unsafe (Figure 3.6). The youths who spent time on the street rated their sleeping arrangements as unsafe more often than those who stayed with friends or relatives (Table 3:41).

FIGURE 3:6
RUNAWAY YOUTH ASSESSMENT OF THE SAFETY OF THEIR SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS WHILE ON-THE-RUN (N=123)

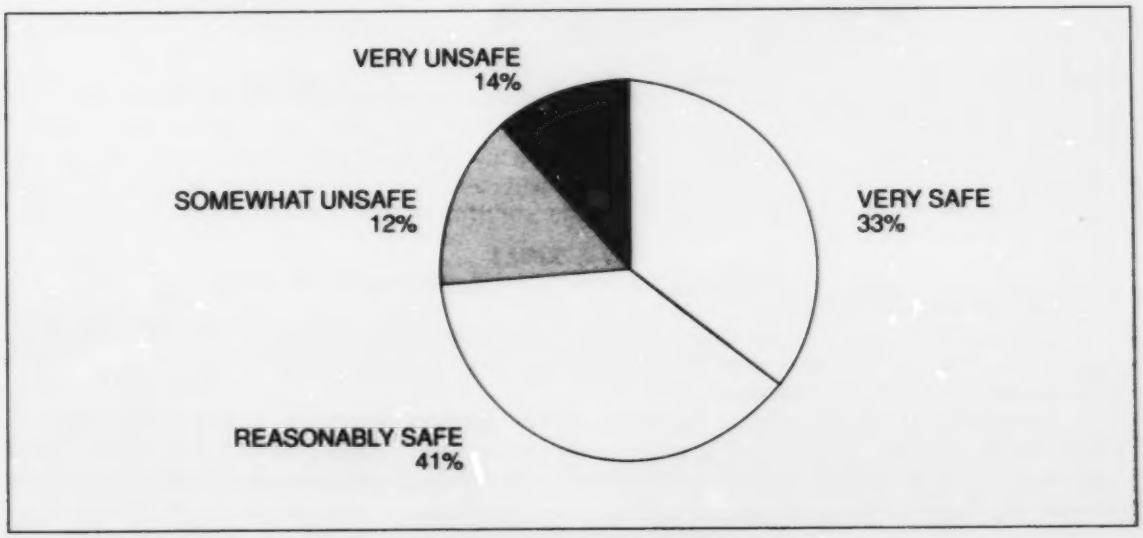
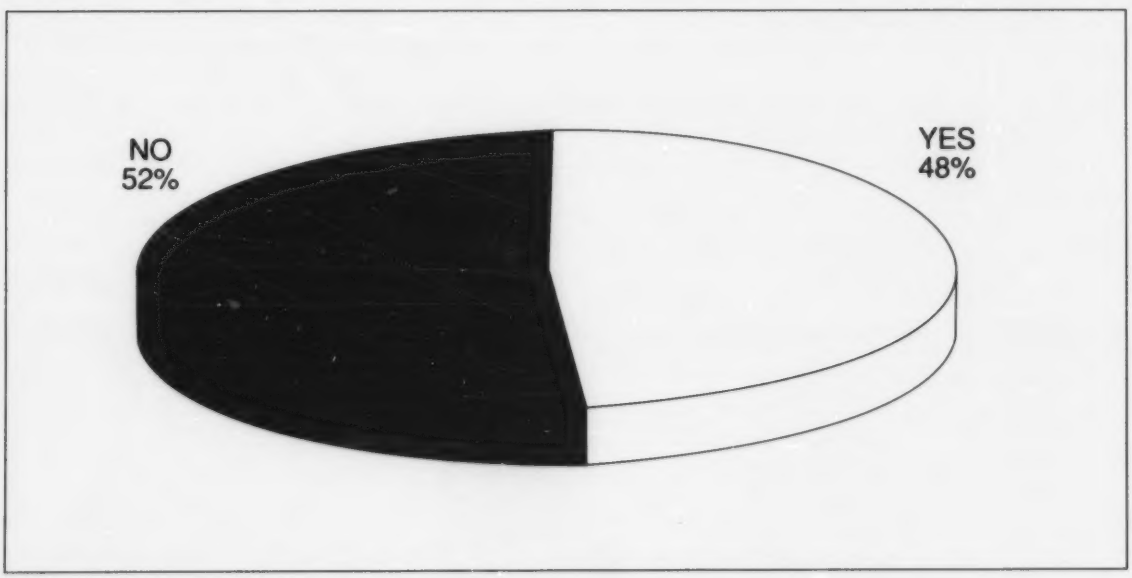


TABLE 3:41
ASSESSED SAFETY BY TYPE OF SLEEPING ARRANGEMENT
(IN PERCENT) (N = 122)

	WHERE SLEPT			
ASSESSED SAFETY	SIGNIFICANT OTHERS ONLY	SIGNIFICANT OTHERS & STREET	**STREET ONLY**	OTHER
SAFE	90	33	**52**	57
UNSAFE	10	67	**48**	43
N =	77	15	**23**	7

As shown in Figure 3.7, only about half of the youths who felt unsafe (48 per cent) attempted to find better accommodations. Four of these 13 youths approached a social service agency for help in regards to shelter. There were many reasons why the other youths did not seek help: fear of being apprehended by police or social workers (6 of 15 responses, or 41 per cent); lack of knowledge of where to go for help; too much pride to ask for help; and not wanting to get anyone else involved (2 of 15 responses, or 13 per cent respectively). Three of the 15 youths (20 per cent) indicated that they did not need help, or were basically happy where they were.

FIGURE 3:7
WHETHER OR NOT BETTER ACCOMMADATIONS WERE SOUGHT
BY RUNAWAY YOUTH WHO FELT UNSAFE (N=29)



iii) Medical Needs:

The runaway youths in the survey sample engaged in various behaviours which could pose a health risk. The prevalence of unprotected sexual activity and high-risk intravenous drug use among this sample of youths are examined here.

According to their self-reports, the overwhelming majority of runaway youths in the sample (82 of 97, or 85 per cent) were sexually active while on-the-run: 77 per cent reported having sex for pleasure; 34 per cent for profit; and, as mentioned previously, 20 per cent exchanged sexual favours for shelter (Figure 3:8).

About half of the runaway youths (54 per cent) reported that they used birth control[20] (Table 3:42). The types of birth control used included: the pill, condoms and other combinations--pill and condoms and withdrawal, withdrawal.

FIGURE 3:8
WHETHER OR NOT RUNAWAY YOUTH HAD SEXUAL INTERCOURSE FOR PLEASURE (N=96) OR PROFIT (N=97) WHILE ON-THE-RUN

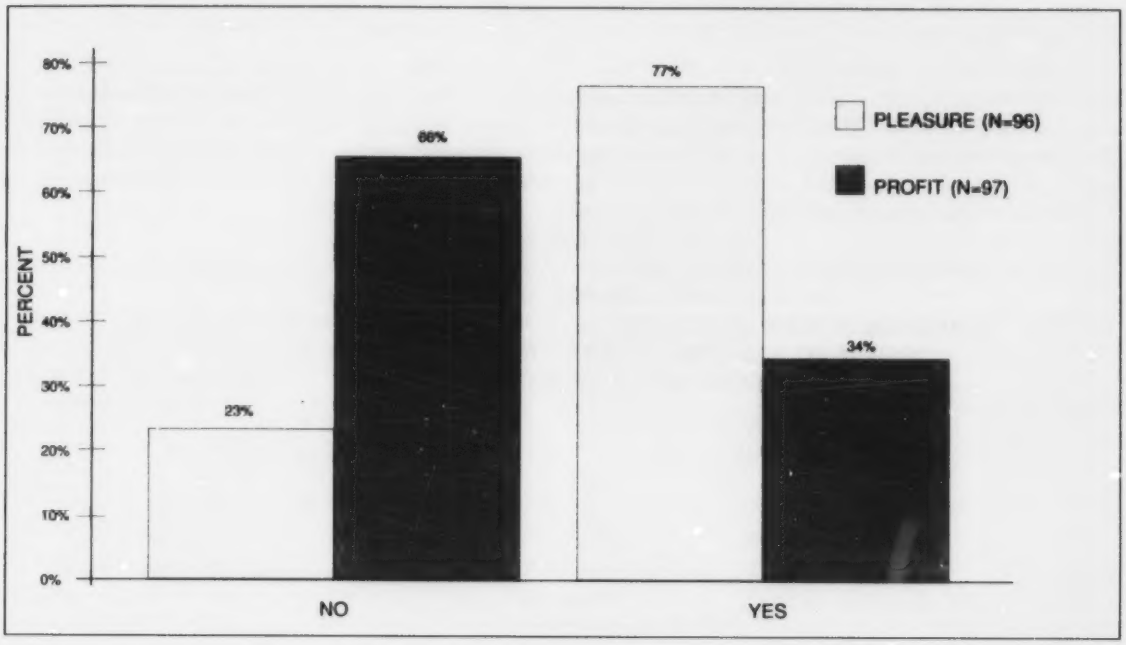


TABLE 3:42
WHETHER RUNAWAY YOUTH USE BIRTH CONTROL AND IF SO WHAT TYPE

USE OF BIRTH CONTROL	N	%	TYPE OF BIRTH CONTROL	N	%
NO	37	46	PILL	16	49
YES	43	54	CONDOMS	13	39
			OTHER	4	12
N	80		N	33	

Only about one-quarter of all runaway youths (28 per cent) reported that they always used condoms; 39 per cent indicated that they used them occasionally; while 33 per cent of runaway youths never used condoms at all (Table 3:43). One-third of the runaway youths (33 per cent) indicated that they had contracted a sexually transmitted disease (Table 3:44). Of the 16 cases where type of sexually transmitted disease was reported 7 involved chlamydia, 3 gonorrhoea, 4 chlamydia and gonorrhoea, 1 gonorrhoea and pubic lice and 1 gonorrhoea, chlamydia and pubic lice.

TABLE 3:43
WHETHER RUNAWAY YOUTH USE CONDOMS (N = 82)

USE OF CONDOMS	N	%
NO	27	33
YES, SOMETIMES	32	39
YES, ALWAYS	23	28

[20] Youths' responses to this item appear to under-estimate their actual use of birth control. Apparently, for some youths, condoms are not seen as a method of birth control. While 67 per cent of all youths indicated that they had used condoms on some occasions at least, if not always, only 54 per cent of all youths reported practising birth control.

TABLE 3:44
WHETHER RUNAWAY YOUTH HAVE CONTRACTED SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES (N = 82)

CONTRACTED SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES	N	%
NO	55	67
YES	27	33

About one-quarter of the runaway youths in the survey sample (22 per cent) reported that they were involved in intravenous drug use while on-the-run (Table 3:45). Six of 19 intravenous drug users (32 per cent) reported that they had shared needles or drug-related equipment. Taken altogether, these reported involvements in needle-sharing and unprotected sexual activity mean that about two-thirds of the runaway youths in the survey sample (63 per cent) have actually participated in behaviours which have put them at risk of contracting AIDS (Table 3:46).

TABLE 3:45
WHETHER RUNAWAY YOUTH ENGAGED IN INTRAVENOUS DRUG USE AND IF SO DID THEY SHARE NEEDLES OR DRUG-RELATED EQUIPMENT WHILE ON-THE-RUN

	INTRAVENOUS DRUG USE		NEEDLE SHARING	
	N	%	N	%
NO	76	78	13	68
YES	21	22	6	32
N =	97	100	19	100

TABLE 3:46
WHETHER RUNAWAY YOUTH HAVE ACTUALLY ENGAGED IN BEHAVIOURS WHICH PUT THEM AT RISK OF CONTRACTING AIDS (N = 97)

RISK BEHAVIOURS	N	%
NO	36	37
YES	61	63

Nearly all of these runaway youths, however, claim that they are aware of AIDS (98 per cent), and that they are knowledgeable about how the disease is transmitted (92 per cent) (Table 3:47). Only 30 per cent of the youths perceive that they have engaged in behaviours which have put them at risk of contracting AIDS (Table 3:48). This reveals a significant difference between actual participation in risk-behaviours and acknowledgement of such by the runaway youths themselves.

TABLE 3:47
WHETHER RUNAWAY YOUTH ARE AWARE OF AIDS AND HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF HOW AIDS IS TRANSMITTED

	AWARE		KNOWLEDGE	
	N	%	N	%
NO	2	2	7	7
YES	95	98	89	92
UNSURE			1	1

TABLE 3:48
WHETHER RUNAWAY YOUTH PERCEIVE THAT THEY HAVE ENGAGED IN BEHAVIOUR WHICH PUTS THEM AT RISK OF CONTRACTING AIDS (N = 97)

RISK BEHAVIOUR	N	%
NO	61	63
UNSURE	7	7
YES	29	30

Table 3:49 further illustrates the discrepancies between actual and perceived risks of contracting AIDS. Only 41 per cent of the runaway youths who had engaged in risk behaviours perceived that they had done so. On the other hand, 11 per cent who had not engaged in risk behaviours perceived an AIDS risk. Clearly, these runaway youths are not as knowledgeable about AIDS as they claim to be.

TABLE 3:49
PERCEIVED RISK OF CONTRACTING AIDS BY ACTUAL PARTICIPATION IN RISK BEHAVIOURS (IN PER CENT) (N = 97)

	ENGAGED IN RISK BEHAVIOURS	
PERCEIVED AIDS RISK	NO (N=36)	YES (N=61)
NO	83	51
UNSURE	6	8
YES	11	41

About half of the runaway youths in the survey sample (64/124, or 52 per cent) reported that they had been in need of medical services while on-the-run. Forty-eight per cent, or 31, of these youths indicated that they had gone without medical services when in need (52 per cent or 33 youth had not). However, as shown in Table 3:50, the overwhelming majority of these youths (87 per cent) had never sought help from anyone to meet their medical needs. Of the few youths who sought help (N=4), only one contacted a social service agency. The others offered a number of reasons for not seeking help: fear of apprehension (12 of 23 response, or 53 per cent); lack of knowledge of where to go; lack of identification and money and a feeling that no one would help (4/23, or 17 per cent, respectively); and the remaining youths (3/23 or 13 per cent) simply waited for their ailments to go away.

TABLE 3:50
WHETHER HELP HAD BEEN SOUGHT BY RUNAWAY YOUTH WHO WENT WITHOUT MEDICAL SERVICES (N = 30)

SOUGHT HELP	N	%
NO	26	87
YES	4	13

The remaining 52 per cent of the runaway youths in the survey sample reported that they had never gone without medical services when in need. As shown in Table 3:51, the majority of these youths (55 per cent) obtained medical services from community health clinics. This demonstrates that, on the whole, runaway youths were much more willing to seek medical care from health clinics, than they were to seek food or shelter from other social service agencies.

TABLE 3:51
HOW RUNAWAY YOUTH OBTAINED MEDICAL SERVICES WHILE ON-THE-RUN (N = 33)

OBTAINED MEDICAL SERVICES FROM	N	%
FRIENDS	2	6
RELATIVES	1	3
SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCY	3	9
COMMUNITY HEALTH CLINIC	18	55
OTHER	9	27

3.4 YOUTH CONTACT WITH, AND ASSESSMENTS OF, KEY SERVICE AGENCIES

The runaway youths in the survey sample were asked to describe further the contacts which they had with police, schools and social service agencies while on-the-run, and to rate these key service agencies on the kind of job which they had done in meeting their needs.

i) Police:

About two-thirds of the runaway youths in the survey sample (64 per cent or 79 youth) reported that they had contact with the police while on-the-run. Although there are no data available on the proportion of runaway youths who were arrested by police, their involvement with the police is probably explained, in part, by the fact that almost all of the runaway youths in the sample (89 per cent or 113 youth) had participated in illegal activities while on-the-run. And, as shown in Table 3:52, their level of participation in illegal activities was found to be quite serious as the majority of youths (51 per cent) had, while on-the-run, engaged in four-or-more of the following criminal activities: prostitution, drug-dealing, theft, robbery, joyriding, shoplifting, forgery and fraud. Nonetheless, for some of these runaway youths, their contact with police may have been limited to the police returning them to their home or placement.

TABLE 3:52
NUMBER OF ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES IN WHICH RUNAWAY YOUTH PARTICIPATED WHILE ON-THE-RUN (N = 113)

# OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	N	%	# OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES	N	%
ONE	15	13	FIVE	15	13
TWO	21	19	SIX	9	8
THREE	19	17	SEVEN	14	12
FOUR	12	11	EIGHT	8	7

About three-quarters of the runaway youths in the survey sample (76 per cent) said that the police were doing a poor job of providing services to runaways, compared to 14 per cent who said that they were doing a fair job and 10 per cent who rated their job performance as good (Table 3:53). These negative assessments of police may be due, in large part, to the role that they play in returning youths to their parental homes or to the care of child and family service agencies. There may also be a perception among these runaway youths that the police view them negatively and do not understand their concerns--although, it is encouraging to see, as shown in Table 3:54, that the runaway youths who had contact with the police while on-the-run viewed them in a more positive light than those who did not have contact. Overall, the fact remains that the great majority of runaway youths gave the police a poor rating, although the data do suggest that this perception diminishes somewhat upon actual contact with police.

TABLE 3:53
RUNAWAY YOUTH ASSESSMENTS OF THE KIND OF JOB THE POLICE ARE DOING IN PROVIDING SERVICES TO RUNAWAY YOUTH (N = 119)

KIND OF JOB	N	%
VERY POOR	57	47
POOR	34	29
FAIR	17	14
GOOD	8	7
VERY GOOD	3	3

TABLE 3:54
RUNAWAY YOUTH ASSESSMENTS OF POLICE SERVICES BY CONTACT WITH POLICE (IN PER CENT) (N = 119)

	CONTACT WITH POLICE	
ASSESSMENT OF SERVICES	NO (N=41)	YES (N=78)
POOR	86	72
FAIR	12	15
GOOD	2	13

ii) Schools:

Most of the runaway youths in the survey sample (58 per cent) had been attending school at the time of their last run from a home or placement. Moreover, about one-quarter of the youths who were interviewed (23 per cent or 29 youth) reported that they had contact with school personnel while on-the-run. It is not known whether these youths who had contact with teachers and guidance counsellors stayed in school while on-the-run; or, whether they never returned to school after running but sought help from (or were contacted by) school personnel outside of the school setting; or whether altogether different circumstances than those described here surrounded their contacts with the schools.

Whatever the nature of these contacts, the schools fared only somewhat better than the police in terms of the runaway youths' assessments of the kind of job that they were doing in providing services to runaways. As shown in Table 3:55, 65 per cent of the runaway youths in the survey sample said that the schools were doing a poor job of providing services to runaways, compared to 20 per cent who said that they were doing a fair job and 15 per cent who rated school services as good. A concern expressed by some of the survey participants was that the schools sometimes did little more than report youth missing to the police--the implicit message being that this discourages runaways from attending school. Again, as with the runaway youth assessments of police services, the data suggests that the youths who had contact with school personnel while on-the-run, rated school services more positively than those who did not have contact (Table 3:56). Of course, the overall assessment of school services remains poor, but it seems that the opportunity remains for school personnel to improve the situation.

TABLE 3:55
RUNAWAY YOUTH ASSESSMENTS OF THE KIND OF JOB SCHOOLS ARE DOING IN PROVIDING SERVICES TO RUNAWAY YOUTH (N = 112)

KIND OF JOB	N	%
VERY POOR	44	38
POOR	30	27
FAIR	22	20
GOOD	14	13
VERY GOOD	2	2

TABLE 3:56
RUNAWAY YOUTH ASSESSMENTS OF SCHOOL SERVICES BY CONTACT WITH SCHOOL PERSONNEL (IN PER CENT) (N = 112)

	CONTACT WITH SCHOOL PERSONNEL	
ASSESSMENT OF SERVICES	NO (N=85)	YES (N=27)
POOR	67	63
FAIR	21	15
GOOD	12	22

iii) Social Service Agencies:

About two-thirds of the runaway youths in the survey sample (65 per cent or 81 youth) reported that they had contact with social service agencies while on-the-run. As shown in Table 3:57, the overwhelming majority of these contacts were with the Winnipeg Child and Family Service agencies, group homes and locked facilities. However, only about one-third of these contacts with social services (35 per cent or 27 youth) were initiated by the runaway youths themselves. Earlier analyses have indicated that very few runaway youths seek help from a professional when they first run; and, furthermore, that they rarely seek the assistance of social service agencies to meet basic needs for food and shelter while on-the-run. This suggests that, for the most part, runaway youths in the sample were initiating contact with social service agencies when they had reached a decision to return to their homes or placements. In fact, at the time that interviews were conducted, 21 of the 127 youths surveyed had voluntarily returned to the same living arrangement from which they had most recently run. The other youths who did not initiate contact with an agency were probably located by police or social workers, and returned to the care of the agency. Overall, about half of the runaway youths interviewed had, after their last run, been returned to an agency placement.

TABLE 3:57
SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES WHICH RUNAWAY YOUTH HAD CONTACT WITH WHILE ON-THE-RUN (N = 81)

SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCY	N	%
WINNIPEG CFS AGENCIES ONLY	33	42
WINNIPEG CFS AGENCY & GROUP HOME	20	25
WINNIPEG CFS AGENCY & LOCKED FACILITY	9	11
WINNIPEG CFS AGENCY & GROUP HOME & LOCKED FACILITY	4	5
WINNIPEG CFS AGENCY & OTHER AGENCIES (Klinic, Rossbrook House, POWER, Probation Service, City Welfare)	5	6
OTHER CFS AGENCY (Awasis, Community Services, Anishinabe, DOCFS)	6	7
GROUP HOME	1	1
BEAT THE STREET	1	1
CITY WELFARE	1	1
MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE	1	1

Despite their demonstrated reluctance to initiate contact with, and seek help from, social service agencies while on-the-run, the runaway youths' assessments of social service agencies were more favourable than those offered for the police and schools. As shown in Table 3:58, 43 per cent of the runaway youths in the survey sample indicated that social service agencies were doing a poor job of providing services to runaways, compared to 26 per cent who said that they were doing a fair job and 31 per cent who rated agency services as good. Despite the tendency of runaways to shy away from social service agencies, these ratings would seem to suggest, nevertheless, that they see the

greatest effort to meet their needs while on-the-run forthcoming from social service agencies--not from the police or the school system. Certainly, their responses still indicate that they are not entirely satisfied with social services, so perhaps the more favourable rating is intended to recognize a superior (although flawed) effort on their part.

The youth survey went beyond an examination of runaway youth contacts with social service agencies while on-the-run. The youths' overall knowledge of, and involvements with, social service agencies was assessed. The survey participants were asked to indicate whether they were aware of, and used, a wide range of social services. Eleven categories of service were examined (e.g., individual and family counselling), with a listing of agencies providing the service included under each category. Furthermore, the youths indicated whether they would consider using each of these categories of service in the future if they needed them; or, if they had previously used these services, whether they would consider doing so again. The overall intent was to assess the runaway youths' knowledge of available services, describe their patterns of service utilization, and ascertain their preferences regarding what types of social services should be developed, and/or expanded to meet the needs of runaway youth.

TABLE 3:58
RUNAWAY YOUTH ASSESSMENTS OF THE KIND OF JOB SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES ARE DOING IN PROVIDING SERVICES TO RUNAWAY YOUTH (N = 80)

KIND OF JOB	N	%
VERY POOR	27	34
POOR	7	9
FAIR	21	26
GOOD	16	20
VERY GOOD	9	11

The proportions of runaway youth who had heard of, and used, each of the various types of social services are shown in Table 3:59. Their knowledge of, and use of, specific service agencies which fall under each of these categories of service is further detailed in Table 3:60.

TABLE 3:59
PROPORTION OF RUNAWAY YOUTH WHO HAVE HEARD OF AND USED VARIOUS TYPES OF SOCIAL SERVICES (IN PER CENT)

	HEARD OF	USED SERVICE
INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY COUNSELLING		
• including CFS agencies	94	91
• excluding CFS agencies	85	53
ALCOHOL & DRUG ABUSE COUNSELLING	98	51
CRISIS LINE & REFERRAL SERVICE	87	47
ACADEMIC & VOCATIONAL COUNSELLING	35	18
ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS	91	52
EMPLOYMENT PREPARATION & WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAMS	87	47
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES	99	95
TEMPORARY CRISIS FOSTER HOMES	49	29
INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAMS	72	28
SHELTER/SAFE HOUSE	87	44
RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS	95	65

TABLE 3:60
PROPORTION OF RUNAWAY YOUTH WHO HAVE HEARD OF AND USED VARIOUS SOCIAL SERVICES (IN PER CENT)

	HEARD OF	USED SERVICE
INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY COUNSELLING		
Family Services of Winnipeg	43	14
Child & Family Service Agencies	96	83
Indian Family Centre	28	10
Family Therapy Program (Children's Home of Winnipeg)	29	15
Psychological Services Centre (University of Manitoba)	14	6
Manitoba Adolescent Treatment Centre	48	7
Ma Mawi Centre	37	14
Village Clinic	20	7
ALCOHOL & DRUG-ABUSE COUNSELLING		
A.D.D.I.C.S. (Alcohol and Drug Dependence Information & Counselling Service)	33	8
A.A. (Alcoholics Anonymous)	98	24
Native Alcoholism Foundation of MB	35	6
Al-Anon	59	18
Alateen	54	20
Lemay House/St. Norbert Foundation	31	4
Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba	85	28
CRISIS LINE & REFERRAL SERVICES		
Teen Touch Distress Line	54	13
Klinic Crisis Line	29	7
Pregnancy Distress Service	53	16
P.O.W.E.R.	42	18
AIDS Information Line	57	8
ACADEMIC & VOCATIONAL COUNSELLING		
Child Guidance Clinic	31	13
Other	8	7
VARIOUS ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS		
Correspondence School (MB Education)	73	27
Argyle Alternative High School	77	18
Rossbrook House Alternative Schools	27	7
Beat the Street Literacy Program	39	9
VARIOUS EMPLOYMENT PREPARATION & WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAMS		
TRY (Training Resources for Youth - Children's Home of Winnipeg)	64	15
TERF (Training & Employment Resources for Females - Children's Home)	40	7
RAP (Resources for Adolescent Parents - Children's Home)	35	4
Job Generation Program YM-YWCA	26	2
Youth Business Learning Development Centre	15	3
Youth Employment Core Program	23	4
Social Skills Orientation Course	9	2
Native Employment Services of Wpg	39	5
Anishinabe R.E.S.P.E.C.T.	21	3
Y.E.S. (Youth Employment Services)	57	13

TABLE 3:60 (cont'd)
PROPORTION OF RUNAWAY YOUTH WHO HAVE HEARD OF AND USED VARIOUS SOCIAL SERVICES (IN PER CENT)

	HEARD OF	USED SERVICE
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES		
Mount Carmel Clinic	69	41
Village Clinic	19	7
Klinic	35	18
Nor'West	10	1
Health Action Centre	16	6
Women's Health Centre	43	12
City Health	14	1
Walk-In Clinics	88	82
St. Boniface	87	45
Health Sciences Centre	91	74
TEMPORARY CRISIS FOSTER HOMES		
CFS Agency Foster Homes	41	21
Other	14	11
VARIOUS INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAMS		
Project Independence (Children's Home of Winnipeg)	27	6
Independence Options Program (Marymound)	30	2
Villa Rosa	47	9
SHELTERS/SAFE HOMES		
Rossbrook House	64	28
Pritchard Drop-In	36	18
Osborne House	56	9
Baldwin House	29	9
Native Women's Transition Centre	16	2
Point North	13	3
VARIOUS RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS		
YM-YWCA of Winnipeg	94	47
Winnipeg Boys and Girls Club	48	19
Care Centre for Native Youth	20	7

The runaway youths in the survey sample appeared to be well informed about the social services which are available to them. As shown in Table 3:59, at least 85 per cent of the runaway youths had heard of one or more of the agencies which provide: individual and family counselling, alcohol- a drug-abuse counselling, crisis line and referral services, alternative education programs, employment preparation and work experience programs, community health services, shelter and recreational programming. For each of these categories of service, the specific agencies with which the youths were most familiar included: Child and Family Service agencies, Alcoholics Anonymous, AIDS Information Line, Argyle Alternative High School, Training Resources for Youth (TRY), Health Sciences Centre, Rossbrook House and the YM-YWCA of Winnipeg (Table 3:60).

In contrast, fewer of the runaway youths were aware of the remaining categories of service: academic and vocational programming (35 per cent), temporary crisis foster homes (49 per cent) and independent living programs (72 per cent). The specific agencies with which they were most familiar in these areas of programming included the Child Guidance Clinic, Child and Family Services agency foster homes and the Villa Rosa program.

The survey findings further reveal that awareness of social services on the part of runaway youths did not necessarily translate into utilization of services. As shown in Table 3:59, the youths' levels of awareness of social services were not reflected in their actual use of services. For the majority of service categories, wide discrepancies of between 17 per cent and 47 per cent were found between the proportions of youth who had knowledge of available services, and those who actually made use of the services. This suggests that if the runaway youth's need for these services exceeded their actual

use of services, lack of information was probably not the barrier which prevented them from accessing appropriate social services. Other, more relevant, factors might include dissatisfaction with the quality of available social services, and the quantity of resources which are available to meet the *expressed needs* of children and youth. In the first instance, many youths may not be using social services because they take a dim view of what is available, and have no desire to avail themselves to these services. Others, perhaps, might have sought assistance and been refused because of a lack of resources.

The important influence which these mitigating factors have on service utilization seems to be borne out in the runaway youths' overall assessments of the social services which they have received, and their expressed preferences regarding what types of services they would consider using in the future. First, as shown in Table 3:61, about one-third of the runaway youths in the sample expressed concerns about the quality of the services which they had received from social service agencies. Thirty-eight per cent of the survey participants rated these agency services as poor, 34 per cent as fair and 28 per cent as good. Moreover, 38 per cent of the runaway youths were of the view that no one agency had done a particularly good job of meeting their needs.

TABLE 3:61
RUNAWAY YOUTH ASSESSMENTS OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES (N = 120)

ASSESSMENT OF SERVICES	N	%
VERY POOR	24	20
POOR	22	18
FAIR	41	34
GOOD	25	21
VERY GOOD	8	7

Table 3:62 presents those agencies which were given a positive rating on this item. Although the majority of youths said that social service agencies were doing a fair-to-good job, these data, nevertheless, indicate that they saw room for improvement in the quality of social services offered to children and youth.

Second, as shown in Table 3:63, for almost all categories of service (excluding individual and family counselling and community health centres), the potential demand for services in the future, among the runaway youths (age 17-and-under), exceeded their actual use of services[21] (compare to figures in Table 3:59). This suggests that the youths surveyed wanted not only better quality services, but more social services as well. Aside from medical services, which almost all of the youths made use of, the services which these youths said they would be most interested in using in the future, included: employment preparation and work experience programs (79 per cent), independent living programs (73 per cent), recreational programs (70 per cent) and shelters or safe homes (66 per cent). The categories of services which the youths were least interested in were individual and family counselling services (48 per cent) and temporary--crisis foster homes (49 per cent).

[21] It is important to note, however, that future demand for social services is not easily measured. It is impossible to state, with absolute certainty, that runaway youths would actually utilize these levels of service in the future, were they made available to them.

TABLE 3:62
RUNAWAY YOUTH ASSESSMENTS OF AGENCIES WHICH DID A PARTICULARLY GOOD JOB OF MEETING THEIR NEEDS (N = 82)

AGENCY	N	%
CHILD & FAMILY SERVICE AGENCIES	24	34
P.O.W.E.R.	7	9
ROSSBROOK HOUSE	4	5
CHILDREN'S HOME	4	5
MACDONALD YOUTH SERVICES	4	5
TERF (Training & Employ. Resour. for Females)	4	5
PREGNANCY DISTRESS SERVICE	3	4
PROJECT NEECHEWAM	3	4
KLINIC	2	2
TRY (Training Resources for Youth)	2	2
FREIGHT HOUSE	2	2
BEAT THE STREET	2	2
POINT NORTH	2	2
MARYMOUND	2	2
MANITOBA YOUTH CENTRE	2	2
SOCIAL ALLOWANCE	2	2
PRITCHARD DROP-IN	1	1
MA MAWI	1	1
NATIVE WOMEN'S TRANSITION CENTRE	1	1
ST. BONIFACE HOSPITAL (MCEWAN)	1	1
INDIAN/MÉTIS FRIENDSHIP CENTRE	1	1
BALDWIN HOUSE	1	1
OSBORNE HOUSE	1	1
ALCOHOLISM FOUNDATION OF MANITOBA	1	1
LEMAY HOUSE/ST. NORBERT FOUNDATION	1	1
ARGYLE ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL	1	1
SALVATION ARMY	1	1
FOSTER HOME	1	1
KNOWLES CENTRE	1	1

TABLE 3:63
PROPORTION OF RUNAWAY YOUTH WHO WOULD CONSIDER USING VARIOUS TYPES OF SOCIAL SERVICES (AGAIN) IF THEY NEEDED THEM (IN PER CENT)

	PROPORTION WHO WOULD USE SERVICE	
TYPE OF SOCIAL SERVICE	ALL YOUTH	YOUTH AGE 17 & UNDER ONLY
INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY COUNSELLING	50	48
ALCOHOL & DRUG ABUSE COUNSELLING	65	64
CRISIS LINE/REFERRAL SERVICE	63	63
ACADEMIC & VOCATIONAL COUNSELLING	60	58
ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS	70	65
EMPLOYMENT PREPARATION & WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAMS	81	79
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES	96	96
TEMPORARY CRISIS FOSTER HOMES	41	49
INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAMS	58	73
SHELTER/SAFE HOUSE	66	66
RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS	72	70

Finally, as shown in Table 3:64, the youths' assessments of the most important services which should be provided for runaway youths in the immediate future, was sought through an open-ended question. Not surprisingly--given the previous analysis of the numbers of youth who had gone without food and shelter while on-the-run--the majority of responses offered by the runaway youths (all youths - 49 per cent; youths age 17-and-under - 50 per cent) pointed to their support for the establishment of a safe house or shelter. Immediate needs for food and clothing were also listed as separate responses by the survey participants (all youths - 14 per cent; youths age 17-and-under - 13 per cent). Beyond the question of immediate needs, the runaway youths were supportive of a variety of social programs--particularly group- and peer-counselling programs, and street outreach workers.

TABLE 3:64
RUNAWAY YOUTH ASSESSMENTS OF THE MOST IMPORTANT SERVICES THAT SHOULD BE PROVIDED FOR THEM IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE (IN PER CENT)*

	ALL YOUTH		YOUTH AGE 17 & UNDER ONLY	
SERVICES	N	%	N	%
FOOD	15	9	9	8
CLOTHING	9	5	6	5
SHELTER/SAFE HOUSE	86	49	60	50
MEDICAL SERVICES	2	1	2	2
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	3	2	3	3
GROUP/PEER COUNSELLING	17	10	9	8
EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS	3	2	3	3
EDUCATION PROGRAMS	2	1	2	2
ALCOHOL/DRUG ABUSE PROGRAMS	2	1	0	0
OUTREACH WORKERS	12	7	5	4
ADVERTISING OF SOCIAL SERVICES	5	3	3	3
INCREASED FUNDING OF SOCIAL SERVICES	3	2	1	1
BETTER HOMES WHERE SOMEONE UNDERSTANDS	6	3	3	3
OTHER**	9	5	9	8
TOTAL	174	100	115	100

* Multiple responses were permitted for this question; hence, the number of responses exceeds the number of youth surveyed.

** "Others" included: friends, foster homes; S.O.C.F.Y.; getting help; their parents; a place where one has control; nothing - kids fend for themselves; and, help from workers not strangers.

4.0 KEY ACTORS SURVEY

The purpose of the *Key Actors Survey* was to discuss with service providers some of the major findings from the survey of runaway and homeless youth; and, in view of those findings, to obtain their suggestions for viable responses to the runaway/homelessness problem in Winnipeg. The survey was conducted with personnel in Child and Family Service Agencies, schools, group homes, community health centres, the police department and other social service agencies concerned with the runaway issue. The results of the key actors survey, conducted with 22 service providers, are presented below.

The survey began with a discussion of the nature and scope of the runaway problem among Winnipeg children and youth. When presented with the results from the analyses of police statistics, which showed a 53 per cent increase in the number of missing youth reports recorded by the police department over the past five years, the majority of the key actors surveyed (59 per cent) concurred that their agency contacts with runaway youths also suggested that the runaway problem was becoming increasingly serious in Winnipeg. The respondents noted, as well, that there were other indicators, besides increasing numbers of missing youth reports, which showed that we are facing a more serious problem now than five years ago. The runaway youths, they said, are younger now and more involved in substance abuse and prostitution than they used to be.

"How does one begin to address the root causes of runaway behaviour?" The survey participants were asked to comment on this question, particularly in view of the youth survey results which showed that the majority of runaway youths came from multiple-problem families where issues such as parent-child communication problems, substance abuse, suicide and sexual abuse were of grave concern. The responses offered by the key actors showed their support for prevention and treatment programs--both were seen as necessary, as one promotes positive behaviours and aims to prevent problems altogether, while the other attempts to break the cycle for individuals who already have a problem.

For instance, in the area of parent-child relationships, the key actors strongly favoured parenting courses such as the S.T.E.P. and "How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk" courses. Parenting programs for young parents, as well as the general student population (e.g., Parent Effectiveness Training), were also seen as crucial. Parent support groups (e.g., Native Parenting Circle), Family Resource Centres and Parent-Child Centres were identified as crucial support services for families. In terms of treatment, many of the key actors saw a need for family therapy services, such as those provided by the Children's Home of Winnipeg and the Interfaith Pastoral Institute. There was general agreement among the service providers that the Child and Family Services system was a crisis-oriented system, which could not provide counselling services to youths and their families.

Similar analyses of the situation, and solutions, were proposed in the areas of substance abuse, suicide and sexual abuse. The key actors supported educational programs on substance abuse for parents and their children. The Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba's (AFM) "Kids and Drugs" program, for example, was identified as a program which targets parents with pre-adolescent children. The need to expand educational activities in the schools was a common concern mentioned by the survey participants. In effect, AFM has recently initiated a one-year pilot project of this kind where counsellors will spend two days per week in the schools, providing alcohol- and drug-abuse education with follow-up support. The project is being implemented in Thompson, Selkirk and three Winnipeg high schools. Presumably, projects of this kind should permit the earlier identification and resolution of substance abuse problems. Another educational approach, favoured by the key actors, was peer counselling--the "Drug Whys" program at Nor'West Co-op was identified as one program which used peers as role models. In addition, AFM has the "One-to-One" program which trains youths in peer-counselling techniques. A final requirement, noted by many of the interviewees, was the need for a residential treatment centre for substance abusers.

Few resources were identified in the area of suicide prevention. The Klinic and Teen Touch crisis line were seen as important services, although it was acknowledged that crisis lines would not appeal to all youth. A number of service providers mentioned that they knew of suicide-prevention workshops for teachers and social agency personnel. S.P.I.N. (Suicide Prevention Intervention Network) was identified as one resource in the schools. The development and/or enhancement of school presentations which instill self-esteem (e.g., I'm Thumbody) and hope for the future, was identified as an effective way of addressing the isolation and despair underlying suicide.

Finally, in the area of sexual abuse programming, the key actors strongly favoured continuation and/or expansion, if necessary, of the "Feeling Yes, Feeling No" program offered in the elementary

schools. On the treatment side, peer support groups for survivors of sexual abuse (e.g., New Beginnings) were identified as crucial. There was general agreement that more treatment groups were required for both the abused and abusers. Mention was made of the program which Probation Services has for abusers, and the Marymound program for children who are abusers.

In sum, the key actors argued strongly that families were in need of preventive and rehabilitative services to address each of the problem areas discussed above, which figure prominently in the lives of runaway youths.

Furthermore, the issue of children running from placements was addressed by the survey participants. In view of the youth survey finding that the majority of runaway youths were unhappy with their living situation, the key actors were asked if they had any suggestions for change which might improve placements, and encourage youths to stay there rather than run.

A number of the key actors responded that it was necessary to situate quality-of-care issues within the broader context of the social services system. One of the concerns raised was that our expectations of foster homes and group homes may be too high, given the paucity of resources which are allotted to these care-givers. In regard to foster care, it was argued that fostering should be made more attractive through increased financial renumeration, and that foster parents should be assisted further (in doing the difficult job which they have to do) with increased training, peer supports and respite services. Similarly, in terms of group homes, it was argued that increased staff complements, and better trained staff, were required to permit relationship-building and counselling with the children in placement.

Aside from resourcing issues, other concerns were raised about the services provided to children-in-care. Shift-staffing in group homes, and the lack of continuity in living arrangements for children-in-care, were identified as major constraining factors that prevent them from developing close ties with others, stabilizing and addressing the major issues in their lives. A few of the survey participants argued that proctor placements were more appropriate for difficult-to-manage children than foster homes or group homes. Others mentioned that locked facilities only prompted youths to run, and that they should be used only when absolutely necessary. A final issue raised by the key actors was that placements need to work at empowering the children in their care--that is, they need to listen more carefully to the expressed needs of these children, and involve them more in defining and selecting among the choices that are open to them.

In sum, the key actors were of the view that both quality- and continuity-of-care needed to be improved for children-in-care. Only part of the solution was seen to lie in securing additional resources, because many of the concerns hinged on the manner in which services were delivered.

Having addressed the reasons why runaway youths leave their homes or placements, the survey participants were asked to comment on how we might ensure that runaway youths are able to meet their basic needs for food, shelter and medical care while on-the-run.

With regard to food, the youth survey findings had shown that over one-third of the runaways had gone without food at least once in the course of their runaway history, moreover, that they almost never sought the assistance of social service agencies. When asked why they thought these runaway youths were not accessing current resources such as soup kitchens, the key actors offered reasons that were very consistent with the views expressed by the runaway youths themselves.

Pride and independence were identified by the key actors as being of paramount importance to runaways, and the most significant barriers to their use of soup kitchens. A number of the survey participants argued that soup kitchens are perceived by runaway youths as frightening and stigmatizing places for "rubbies" and the "down and outs." Another concern, which keeps youths away, is their fear of being apprehended by police or social workers at one of these locales. Lack of information about these resources was also identified as a barrier to the use of services by runaway youths. And, finally, sporadic hours of operation, lack of evening hours and transportation problems were mentioned as other factors that might have an effect on service utilization.

Various courses of action were proposed to address these concerns. The most common of these was the suggestion that more effort should be spent in promoting soup kitchens to runaways, and in a way that addresses their unique concerns. The use of outreach workers to take runaways to the soup kitchens and/or to direct them, and allay their fears about risk of detection, was also advocated. Other suggestions were that food should be available not only in soup kitchens but at drop-in centres; and, that both food and shelter should be provided in a safe house established, specifically, for children and youth.

With regard to shelter, the youth survey findings had shown that about one-third of the runaways had slept on the street at least once in the course of their runaway history; and, that again, they had almost never sought the assistance of social services agencies to obtain better accommodations. One-fifth of the runaway youths, moreover, had exchanged sexual favours for a place to stay. When asked what could be done to ensure that runaway youths do not sleep on the street, or prostitute themselves for a place to stay, the key actors suggested a number of housing options: supervised, independent-living programs, co-op housing for runaways, temporary-crisis foster homes and a safe house/shelter, specifically for children and youth.

Most of the key actors indicated that they would support additional funding of independent living programs, provided that these programs were well supervised and emotionally nurturing for the youths involved. Furthermore, they were of the view that this type of programming would address some of the gaps in service that exist for the 15- to 17-year-olds who are, basically, forgotten by the child and family services system. A few cautionary notes, however, were offered regarding independent-living programs. Without close supervision, it is possible that some quarters could be turned into "party houses" or "hangouts" that attract runaways, pimps and gangs. Some doubts were also expressed about whether street kids would actually use independent-living programs if the route of access were through child and family service agencies. Others mentioned that not all youths, necessarily, want to live alone, and that other options, such as proctor placements and co-op housing, may provide them with the companionship and emotional support that they desire.

All of the key actors argued that runaway youths should have a safe place to go to when they leave their homes or placements. A network of temporary-crisis foster homes, akin to the block-parent system, was put forth as one option. However, the option most strongly favoured by these service providers was a safe house or shelter. There were different views regarding how a shelter should operate, with areas of disagreement centring on:

a) what constituted an appropriate age range for shelter clientele;
b) whether the child's or youth's identity ought to remain anonymous, versus the need to institute reporting procedures to the family and the child and family services; and
c) whether the shelter ought to expect its clientele to engage in focused goal-oriented activities, versus the adoption of a more non-interventionist stance.

The common thread among the majority of the key actors was their support for the establishment of a safe house or shelter in Winnipeg.

Last, but not least, the key actors identified the important role that the runaway youths themselves should play in the development and delivery of all service alternatives, including the safe house or shelter.

Finally, with regard to medical needs, the youth survey findings had shown that about two-thirds of the runaways had participated in behaviours such as unprotected sexual activity and needle-sharing, which put them at risk of contracting AIDS. Only about one-third of these youths, however, thought that they had been involved in behaviours that put their health at risk. When asked what could be done to reduce runaway youth involvement in these health-risk behaviours, the key actors identified educational activities as being of prime importance.

The combined efforts of the media, schools, and a street outreach program were seen as necessary to effectively get the message across to runaway youths. The key actors saw a need for more educational programs in the schools; more explicit and appealing media presentations which are marketed to youths--not adults; and, a street outreach program, which provides information to runaways on their turf. It was suggested as well, that the successes achieved through educational efforts of this kind might be enhanced through the use of peer teaching. This implies that former runaways could form part of an effective outreach team which would provide education in the schools, and on the streets. Again, as with the safe house, the exact program parameters would have to be the subject of future deliberations, as there are widely divergent views on whether the distribution of condoms and needles ought to form part of a street outreach program.

Having addressed the issue of immediate needs, the key actors were asked to offer suggestions on how we might assist runaway youths to plan for the future. The majority of the respondents emphasized that our efforts must be focused on keeping these youths in school. The need for more alternative education programs was identified, as many runaway youths do not fit into the mainstream school system. Some of the important special needs programs mentioned by the key actors included: Rossbrook House Alternative Schools, Point Douglas School program for pregnant teens, the Youth Re-Entry program for Asian Youth and the Alternative education programs offered by Kelvin, Gordon

Bell and Argyle high schools. The Winnipeg Education Centre and Beat the Street literacy skills program were identified as options for young adults who have been out of school for a period of time.

The need to support and enhance youth employment programs was identified as another area of priority. Some of the employment preparation and work experience programs mentioned by the key actors included: TRY (Training Resources for Youth), TERF (Training and Employment Resources for Females), RAP (Resources for Adolescent Parents), LIFE (Learning Intervention for Employment), WOW (Work Orientation Workshops), YES (Youth Employment Services) and Anishinabe RESPECT. It was suggested that these employment programs would better serve the needs of their participants if they were of a longer term, and if more training opportunities were available in specialized skill areas.

A final area of discussion raised with the key actors (among all of the needs discussed) focused on selecting the most important service that should be provided for runaway youths in the immediate future. The majority of the respondents stated that first priority should be given to the establishment of a shelter, or safe house, for children and youth. Other categories of service mentioned by the key actors included: street outreach, residential educational institutions, employment programs, and prevention and treatment programs.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

LIST OF NEEDS ASSESSMENT

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

LIST OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Liz Adkins	Asst. Director Clinical Services, Children's Home of Winnipeg
Richard Asselin	Child Day Care, Department of Family Services
Dianne Bulmer	Pathway Homes
Linda Campbell	Child & Family Services, Research Group-University of Mb.
Catherine Charette	Institute of Urban Studies, University of Winnipeg
Patrick Falconer	Winnipeg Core Area Initiative
Irene Haigh	Mount Carmel Clinic
Colleen Horbay	Social Planning Council of Winnipeg
Martin Itzkow	Winnipeg Boys & Girls Clubs
Donna-Lee Lalonde	Teen Touch
Mike Mackenzie	Central Child & Family Services
Evelyn Mathers	Child & Family Services Directorate, Dept. of Family Ser.
Ken Murdoch	Northwest Child & Family Services
Sharon Pekrul	R.B. Russell School
Don Robinson	Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre
John Rodgers	Main Street Project
Staff Sgt. Sam Sewell	Youth Division - Winnipeg Police Department
Gert Vogan	Social Planning Council of Winnipeg
Al Wieler	Seven Oaks School Division

APPENDIX B

KEY ACTORS SURVEY

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

INTRODUCTION

This "Key Actors Survey" is being conducted with personnel in Child and Family Service Agencies, schools, group homes, community health centres, the police department and other social service agencies concerned with the issue of runaway/homelessness.

The purpose of the survey is to discuss with you some of the major findings from the SPC survey of runaway and homeless youth; and, furthermore, in view of those findings, to obtain your suggestions for viable responses to the runaway/homelessness problem in Winnipeg.

Date of Interview: _____

Key Actor (Record Agency Affiliation) _____

First, I'd like to discuss with you the nature and scope of the runaway problem among Winnipeg youth.

1. Over the past five years, police statistics have shown a 53% increase in the number of missing youth reports recorded by the Winnipeg Police Department.

   (a) Have your agency contacts with runaway youth indicated, as these police statistics suggest, that the runaway problem has become increasingly serious in Winnipeg?

   (b) If YES, what are some of the indicators that we are facing a more serious problem now than 5 years ago?

2. The runaway youth who we interviewed came from very troubled families - 90% had verbal arguments with their parents and 66% had physical fights with them; 76% of these youths had alcohol or drug-abuse problems, 52% had attempted suicide and 49% had been sexually abused.

   (a) In your view, how should we be addessing these underlying causes of runaway behaviour?

   (b) Are you aware of any model prevention programs which could be developed, or enhanced, to address each of these problems?

   - parent/child communication problems
   - substance abuse
   - suicide
   - sexual abuse

   Are you supportive of these prevention programs?

   (c) Our survey results showed that the largest number of runaway youth had obtained individual and family counselling services from the Winnipeg Child and Family Service agencies. In your view, have these agencies been able to provide adequate counselling services for youth and their families? If NO, why not? What is your assessment of the unmet needs presented here? Where are the gaps in service?

   (d) Our survey results showed that the largest number of runaway youth had obtained alcohol and drug-abuse counselling services from the Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba. (AFM) In your view, have agencies such as AFM been able to provide adequate alcohol and drug-abuse counselling services for youth and their families? If NO, why not? What is your assessment of the unmet needs presented here? Where are the gaps in service?

3. Fifty-nine per cent of the runaway youth who we interviewed had last run from a placement such as a foster home, group home or locked facility. The majority of these youth (73%) said that they ran because they were unhappy with their living situation.

   (a) In your view, is there anything that care providers could be doing to prevent youth from running from their placements?

   (b) Do you have any suggestions for change that would make placements a better place to live for these youth?

Having dealt with prevention issues, I would now like to discuss some of the practical difficulties that runaway youth face when they actually leave their homes or placements. Our survey focused on the ability of these youths to meet basic needs for food, shelter and medical care while on the run.

4. Thirty-eight per cent of the youths who we interviewed had gone without food at least once in the course of their runaway history. Only one of these youths had contacted a social service agency for help. The remaining 62% of the youths were able to obtain food, although 25% engaged in illegal activities to do so. Only one of these youths used a food bank.

   (a) In your view, why are these youth not accessing current resources such as food banks? (PROBE: Is there anything about the manner in which food banks are delivering services, which discourages use of these services by runaway youth?)

   (b) What should these agencies be doing to ensure that runaway youth access current resources, rather than doing without food or engaging in illegal activities to meet their needs?

5. Thirty-two per cent of the youths who we interviewed had slept on the street at least once in the course of their runaway history. Most of the remaining youths (62%) had usually stayed with friends, boy/girlfriends or relatives. Six per cent had stayed in hotels. Twenty per cent of the runaway youths had exchanged sexual favours for a place to stay.

   (a) What do you think should be done to ensure runaway youths do not sleep on the street, or prostitute themselves for a place to stay?

   (b) Are there any resources already available in the social services system which could address this immediate need, and which are not being used by runaway youth?

   (c) Would you support the establishment of a shelter or safe house for runaway and homeless youth in Winnipeg? Why/why not?

   (d) Do you think that Child & Family Service agencies should be provided with more funds for independent living programs? Why/why not? Are there any eligibility requirements pertaining to independent living programs which would discourage their use by runaway youth? Are there entrance requiremments, such as having to live in a group-home setting before moving on to an ILP, which might be perceived as barriers by runaway youth?

   (e) What, in your view, are some of the long-term housing needs of these youths and their families? (e.g., room and board, low rental, co-op housing)

6. Sixty-three per cent of the youths who we interviewed had participated in behaviours such as unprotected sexual activity and needle-sharing, which put them at-risk of contracting AIDS. Only 30% of these youths, however, perceived that they had engaged in behaviours which put them at-risk of contracting AIDS.

   (A) What do you think should be done to better educate runaway youth about how AIDS is transmitted?

   (B) What kinds of interventions, in your view, will effect behavioural changes among these youth? (PROBE: Do you think that their involvement in health-risk behaviours would decline if clean needles and condoms were made readily available? Why/why not?)

   (c) Would you support a needle-exchange program? Why/why not?

(d) Would you support a street outreach program? Why/why not?

7. Our survey results showed that 89% of the runaway youths interviewed had participated in illegal activities while on-the-run. Thirty-two per cent had been involved in prostitution, 56% in drug dealing, 72% in shoplifting and 51% in other thefts.

   (a) What do you think should be done to reduce the likelihood that runaways will meet their financial needs through prostitution and drug dealing?

   (b) Do you see the provision of financial assistance to children under the age of 18 as a viable response to this aspect of the runaway problem? Why/why not?

> Having addressed the issue of immediate needs, I would now like to discuss how we could assist these youth to plan for the future.

8. Seventy-nine per cent of the runaway youth (age 17-and-under) who we interviewed said that they would use the services of and employment-preparation or work-experience program.

   (a) Are you aware of any model employment programs which are particularily suited to this target group of runaway youth?

   (b) What, in your view, should we be doing to address the employment needs of these youth?

9. Sixty-five per cent of the runaway youth (age 17-and-under) who were interviewed said that they would use the services of an alternative education program, and 58% said that they would use academic and vocational counselling services if they needed them. Almost all of the youth who we talked to wanted to improve their educational standing: 39% said that they wanted to complete Grade 12, and 54% wanted to go to community college or university.

   (a) Are you aware of any model educational programs which are particularly suited to this target group of runaway youth?

   (b) What, in your view, should we be doing to address the educational needs of these youth?

10. In view of all the presenting needs which we have discussed, what do you think is the most important service that should be provided for runaway youth in the immediate future?

11. Finally, I would like to obtain your assessments of the kind of job that the police, schools and other social service agencies are doing in providing services to runaway youth. Overall, would you say that these agencies are doing a poor, fair or good job? Why do you say that? Is there anything about the manner in which these agencies deliver services which could be improved?

INTERVIEWEES

KEY ACTORS SURVEY

AGENCY/PROGRAM	# OF RESPONDENTS
- BIZ (Business Improvement Zone) Committee	2
- Child and Family Service Agencies	3
- Winnipeg Police Department	1
- Schools	3
- Community Health Centres	2
- Alcohol & Drug Abuse Programs	1
- Employment Preparation and Work Experience Programs	1
- Shelters/Safe Homes	2
- Hunger Survey	1
- Immigrant/Ethno-Cultural Community	1
- Other Social Services (Group Homes, P.O.W.E.R., Main Street Project)	5
TOTAL	22